THE

Worthy Communicant:

Or, A

TREATISE,

Shewing the due Order of Receiving the Sacrament of the

Lord's Supper.

By

JER. DYKE, sometimes Minister of *Epping* in *Essex*.

Whereunto is added,

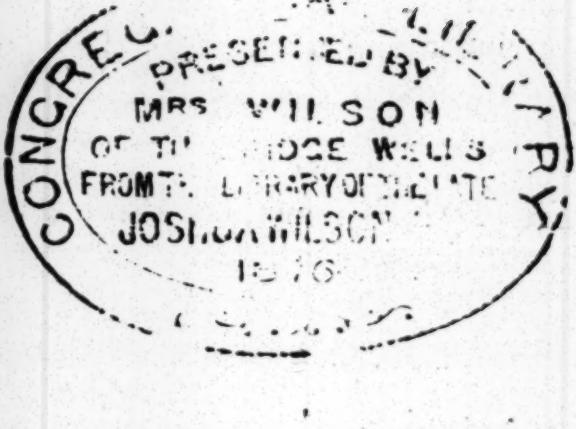
A Sacramental Catechism;

Wherein the Doctrine and Ordinance of the Lord's Supper is explained, and several cases of Conscience relating thereunto Resolved.

By John Fall de

LONDON,

Printed for *Nathaniel Ranew* at the Kings Arms in St. *Pauls Church-Yard.* 1675.


CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY
PRESENTED BY
MRS WILSON
OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS
FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE LATE
JOSIAH WILSON
1876

READER,

WERE *not* Christianity *declined, and the Love of its Professors to their* Redeemer *and to each other grown* cold; *the Doctrine of the Lord's Supper would be better* studied, *and its celebration more* frequent, *and better* attended. *The primitive Christians thought it not such a burthen, as was enough to be born once or twice a year; but such a duty, profit, and* delight; *that* once a week *was too little for its exercise and enjoyments. Christ is as sweet as ever. The vertues of his Blood are as powerful. His Ordinance for conveying Spiritual benefits perish not with the useing. Nor hath that blessing which our Lord adjoyned to this Ordinance in its first Institution lost its Spirits and* efficacy, *where 'tis* duly *administred and attended unto.*

I would it were not too true, that as an unworthy ignorance, contempt, or neglect of it, hath been the guilt of many: so a superstitious, or superficial practice of it hath been the guilt of more. All which together have joyned their forces, to bring it under the disreputation of an indifferent *or* insipid *thing. But blessed be God there are many, whose Conscientious and orderly attendance on the Lord therein, hath met with that entertain-*

ment and Soul-advantage, which hath commended it to their experience, *as the Authority of thier Lord's Command hath Commended it to their* conscientious *observance. Yea such have been their blessings at the Lord's Table, that they have reckoned its hours the best they have enjoyed, or* hope *to enjoy on this side Heaven.*

What can be more glorious to behold, than the Reconciliation of all *the Attributes of God, to the raising of sinful miserable man to the happiness he had lost and more? What more* stupendious, *than that* God *should become* Man, *that he might obey, suffer, and* dye *to make the* atonement? *What more* satisfactory *to Faith, than to behold a price laid down by our Redeemer, to the* full *value of all that good it hopes for, according to the* Promises *and* Covenant? *What can meet the taste and relish of a Soul* bowed-down *under a load of sin and wrath, whose Spirits are* wasted *with sorrowful and* successless *agitations under the sence of its misery and impotency? like the transmitting its burthens on those shoulders, its Wounds into the Body and Soul of that Almighty Redeemer, who* became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him? *What more acceptable to a Soul* principled *with the Love of God and Christ, than to have their*

Love

Love again and again repeated, and particularly confirmed to her: and also under the sweet and powerful impressions of that Love, to be returning Love for Love, protesting its unexpressible obligations to the Divine Wisdom and goodness, and renewing its Vows and Covenants for ever to be the Lord's, who thus dearly bought her? What more welcome and edifying *to a real Saint, than to behold that sight in which sin is discovered most hateful, and holiness most* lovely and rational: *to eat and drink of that cheer which is both a Feast and Physick; a* Cordial *to Grace and well-grounded Comforts; and a poyson to those lusts and delusions that war against the Soul? In a word, to behold the enemy in his full strength, and our Champion obtaining a compleat victory? to celebrate those triumphs with our Saviour (so far as we are capable now) whose Glory will be infinitly great, and everlasting in the other Life?*

These and many more, even all the blessings of the Gospel are the entertainments and exercises of this Ordinance, and that in a more than ordinary solemn *and* effectual *way. It would be much better with the Church of God, if Subjects of this* nature *were more relished; and took up the room of* those, *whose tendency is but* unprofitable *contention, and the* sowring *the Spirits of Men and Christi-*

ans one towards another. The Holy Apoſtle Paul deſired to know nothing among the Corinthians *but Jeſus Chriſt and him* Crucified. *The temper or rather the* diſtempers *of the Profeſſors of our Age and Nation, being much the ſame with theirs; calls for the* ſame *remedy. Were their notions high, but lives very low? Contentions* hot *about circumſtances, and affections* cold *to their Brethren, and the more* ſubſtantial *duties of Religion? Did they admire* Men, *diſſolve into* parties; *ſlighting in the mean while the* grand intereſt *of Chriſtianity, and the* commonwealth *of Iſrael? I would I could ſay that we tread not in their ſteps. Certainly we need to be minding more a* Crucified *Chriſt, to teach us* Mortification, *and to be more in the* Communion *of Saints, to* excite *our Love, and* cement *our* Union.

Among others who have written on the Subject of the Lord's Supper, the Worthy and Reverend Author of this Treatiſe (now with the Lord) hath not been the leaſt conſiderable. And although the preſent Age hath been ſo thronged with Books treating on ſubjects of Divinity, that many have been ſtifled ſo ſoon as peept out into the World, and many more (though deſerving better entertainment) have not lived to the expence of their firſt impreſſion. This Treatiſe hath found accepta ion

for

for about fifteen or ſixteen Impreſſions, which can be ſaid of few Books beſide, and which is an evidence of its abundant uſefulneſs and value. That it might be within the reach of the poor, who can not ſpare the price of it at large; I have at the requeſt of the Book-ſellers abridged it to this little volume: wherein you have the Author's method and heads of matter preciſely, *and what I judged moſt conſiderable. If in the Connexion I have ſometimes varied the phraſe and ſtile, neceſſity may plead my pardon: and I hope the judicious Reader will find (upon the whole) no juſt cauſe of diſtaſte. Some things where I found occaſion, I have explained; and many uſeful citations in the margin (which were only in their Original Language, and ſo out of the reach of the meer Engliſh Reader) I have turned into Engliſh for their ſervice. I have alſo added a* Sacramental Catechiſm, *explaining the Doctrine and Ordinance of the* Lord's *Supper, in its nature, adminiſtration, ends, and benefits; obviated the Objections of* Enthuſiaſts, *and the corruptions of* Papiſts, *ſo far as is meet for a work of this nature. The whole I leave to the bleſſing of the Lord, who am the unworthyeſt of his Servants*

JOHN FALDO.

Aug. 20.
1674.

A Table of the Heads of this Treatise.

THe due Order of receiving the Sacrament of the Supper, and seeking God therein stands in three kinds of duties.

1. Duties antecedent. In doing such duties as must go before the Sacrament. All which come under the general Head of preparation. Preparation is two-fold.

   1. Habitual, having the Soul furnished with such graces as may make a man a worthy Communicant.

      They are these,
      - Knowledge,
      - Faith,
      - Repentance,
      - Charity,
      - Obedience.

   2. Actual, which stands in these things:

      1. Solemn sequestration of a man's self.
      2. Examination,
         1. Of the truth of
            - Faith,
            - Repentance,
            - Love,
            - Obedience.
         2. Of growth of grace.
         3. Of our wants.
      3. Renewing and quickning our Habitual Graces.
      4. Excitation and stirring up in our selves strong desires after Christ.
      5. Stirring up in our selves a strong expectation of the benefits to be had in the Sacrament.
      6. Earnest seeking of God by Prayer.

2. Duties

2. Duties concomitant. In doing such duties as accompany the action of Receiving, where the general duty is: The offering up of our selves to God, in an holy and spiritual disposition in receiving the Sacrament.

This stands in five things.
- 1. Solemn and serious meditation.
- 2. An exercise of Repentance, standing in
  - Godly sorrow for sin.
  - A Solemn renewing of our Covenant with God.
- 3. The Actuating of faith upon
  - Sacramental offers.
  - Sacramental promises.
  - Sacramental representations.
- 4. The duty of Thanksgiving.
- 5. An exercise of Love and Mercy.

3. Duties subsequent. In doing such duties as must follow after Receiving.

And they are two
- 1. Examining a man's self, how he hath sped at the Supper.
  - 1. If sped ill, then
    - 1. Find out the cause of miscarriage, and be humbled for it.
    - 2. Labour by after-pains to quicken and make the Sacrament effectual.
  - 2. If sped well, then
    - 1. Bless God for it
    - 2. Labour to keep and maintain the holy frame of heart, gotten at the Sacrament.
- 2. A special care to keep our vows, & express the power of the Ordinance, in our holiness of life and obedience.

A Table of the ſeveral Chapters of this Treatiſe.

Chap. 1. *That God muſt be ſought in a right Order, as well as in a right Ordinance.*

Chap. 2. *The neceſſity of preparation before the Sacrament.*

Chap. 3. *The danger of coming to the Sacrament without preparation.*

Chap. 4. *The neceſſity of knowledg in a Communicant.*

Chap. 5. *The neceſſity of Faith in a worthy Receiver.*

Chap. 6. *The neceſſity of Repentance in a prepared Communicant.*

Chap. 7. *The neceſſity of Charity and Love in an orderly Communicant.*

Chap. 8. *The neceſſity of Obedience in an orderly Communicant.*

Chap. 9. *The ſolemn ſequeſtring, and ſetting a man's ſelf apart before the Sacrament.*

Chap. 10. *Of Examination.*

Chap. 11. *The Examination of Faith.*

Chap. 12. *The Examination of Repentance.*

Chap. 13. *The Examination of Love.*

Chap.

Chap. 14. *The Examination of Obedience.*
Chap. 15 *The growth of Grace, and our wants examined.*
Chap. 16. *Habitual Graces to be quickned and renewed before the receiving of the Sacrament.*
Chap. 17. *Excitation of earneſt deſires after Chriſt, and a ſtrong expectation to receive him, and his benefits.*
Chap. 18. *God to be ſought in ſpecial manner by Prayer, before the Sacrament.*
Chap. 19. *Meditation, and an exerciſe of Repentance at the Sacrament.*
Chap. 20. *Faith to be actuated and exerciſed in the Sacrament, and an exerciſe of Thanksgiving, Love, and Mercy.*
Chap. 21. *Subſequent duties, ſuch as muſt follow the Sacrament received.*

Supplement.

The Sacramental Catechiſm.

ERRATA.

P. 7. *l.*7 read *Aquinas*. *P.* 18. *l.* 12. *dele blood*. *P.* 85. *l.* 3. *dele is put into the height*. *P.* 100. *l.* 3. read *power*. *P.* 139. *l.* 17. read *prepare*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THere is lately publiſhed an excellent Treatiſe, called *The Harmony of the Divine Attributes in the Contrivance and Accompliſhment of Mans Redemption by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt:* Or, *Diſcourſes*, wherein is ſhewed, how the *Wiſdom*, *Mercy*, *Juſtice*, *Holineſs*, *Power*, *and Truth* of God are Glorified in that Great and Bleſſed Work.: By *WILLIAM BATES*, D. D.

Solitude improved by Divine Meditation; or, a Treatiſe, *ſhewing the Excellency, and proving the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of Divine Meditation.* By Nathaniel Ranew.

Correction and Inſtruction, *or a Treatiſe of* Affliction; *very uſeful in theſe diſtracted times.* By *Thomas* Caſe.

The Poor doubting Chriſtian drawn to Jeſus Chriſt. By Thomas Hooker.

THE

The Introduction to the following Treatiſe, grounded upon 1 *Chron.* 15. 13.

For becauſe ye did it not at the firſt, the Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we ſought him not after the due order.

CHAP. I.

That God muſt be ſought in a right Order, as well as in a right Ordinance.

WE read 1 *Sam.* 4. 3, 4. That the *Iſraelites* being beaten by the *Philiſtines*, they ſend for the Ark of *God* from *Shiloh* to be brought into the Camp; that it might ſave them out of the hands of their Enemies. Such are the ſilly confidences of Superſtitious and Carnal Hearts, relying on outward ſigns, and neglecting the *real preſence* of God:

as if God were *Chained* to the Ark. A *far-wiſer* courſe it had been to have procured the preſence of the Lord of Hoſts *himſelf* amongſt them, which could have ſaved them without the *Ark*; but not the Ark without that. This they might have learned from Moſes, Numb. 10. 36. *And it came to paſs when the Ark ſet forward, that Moſes ſaid; Riſe up, O Lord, and let thine Enemies be ſcattered.* He knew that though the Ark did *riſe*, if God ſat *ſtill*; it could not make one Enemy fly.

But had there been ſomewhat in the *meer* preſence of the Ark, *Hophni* and *Phinehas* being with it, were enough to *diſtaſt* the *Lord* to a departure. The Iſſue gave a Character of their vain Confidence. That which they hoped would have ſaved them *out* of the hands of their Enemies, was delivered *into* the hands of their Enemies. *He delivered his ſtrength into captivity, and his glory into the Enemies hand.* Pſal. 78. 61. For all this, the *Philiſtines* had little cauſe to *boaſt* of their Victory: though the Ark *ſaved not* Iſrael, it proved a *plague* to their Adverſaries. God ſometimes hides his Face *from* his People, but he ſets his Face *againſt* the Wicked: the *Philiſtines* had ſoon enough of their prey. The Preſence of an angry God is ruine and terrour,

as

as of a reconciled God is ſafety and ſweetneſs. Upon this experiment the *Philiſtines* ſend the Ark to its own home, acknowledging that though *Iſrael* were *Vanquiſhed*, the God of *Iſrael* remained *Victor* over their *Conquerors*.

The Ark being ſent home was placed in *Kirath-Jearim*, where it continued till the time of *David's* being King over all *Iſrael*, and ſeated in *Jeruſalem*.

The firſt thing *David* then undertakes, is to bring the Ark to *Jeruſalem*; but in its management a double diſorder was committed: The Ark that ſhould have been born on the *Prieſt's ſhoulders* was *carted*, and *Uzzah touched* the Ark; for which error he dyed on the ſpot, as an example to the reſt of God's diſpleaſure againſt thoſe who ſhall neglect but the *Manner* and *Circumſtances* of his Ordinances, where his *Authority* hath Preſcribed: So jealous is God of his great name, which he will have Sanctified by all thoſe that draw near unto him. The Senſe of this puts *David* on a Reformation of that diſorder, which he acknowledges the cauſe of the ſore breach on *Uzzah*. 1 Chron. 15. 13. *The Lord our God made a breach upon us, for that we not ſought him after the due Order.* The point that we may learn hence is this:

That it is not enough to ſeek God, but we muſt alſo ſeek him in the order he hath appointed: and where it is otherwiſe, Men may expect a breach inſtead of a bleſſing. The want of this *due* Order turned the expectations of a *good* day into *ſadneſs*: they were ſent home with *ſorrowful* Hearts. And if God were ſo ſevere on the *Iſraelites* for a failure in a Circumſtance of *outward* Order, how much more may a breach be expected in the room of a bleſſing, where the *inward* Order and due Frame of the Soul is neglected, in our drawing nigh to God? The Lord hath appointed not only the *matter* of duties, but alſo their *manner* of performance: Obedience in both muſt be joyned, or we ſeparate their bleſſing from our Souls. We read what entertainment thoſe find with God who obſerve his wayes in ſeeking him, *Iſa.* 64. 5. *Thou meeteſt him that rejoyceth, and worketh Righteouſneſs; thoſe that remember thee in thy Wayes*: What was God's meeting them *here*, but *their* meeting with the promiſed and expected bleſſing?

One ſpecial part of the due Frame of their Souls was, that they wrought Righteouſneſs with *rejoycing*, his Wayes were not a *burthen* and wearineſs, but a delight to them. A dead *dull* Heart in duties is a *diſor-*

diſorderly Heart, that will make but *poor earnings*. *Ye ſhall ſeek me and find me, when you ſhall ſearch for me with all your Heart.* Cheerfulneſs and Integrity are but the Order and Manner of performing Duties, yet the promiſe is to them.

If we go over the ſeveral Ordinances, we ſhall find this true. In the *Word*, God is to be *ſought*: yet if the *manner* be not duly performed, we ſhall meet with a *rebuke*. Thus it was with the *Jews* Iſa. 58. 2. they *delighted* to approach to God, they *asked the Ordinances of Juſtice*: but in the mean time they indulged to their luſts, and were *unmerciful* to others: and therefore God upbraids them with their Duties, and ſpreads them as *Dung* upon their Faces. *Prayer* is a Bleſſed Ordinance, yet if not rightly *ordered* it becomes Sin. And how great a curſe is it, to have our very Duties become Sin? *Let his Prayer become Sin.* Pſal. 109. 7. was one of the heavieſt judgments that *David* imprecated on the worſt of his and the Lord's Adverſaries. *The Sacrifice of the Wicked is an abomination to the Lord, how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?* So in Faſting *Is this the Faſt that I have choſen?* In the Sacrament of the Paſſeover, *Judas* not having his Heart right with God when he received the Sop;

instead of the Lord Christ, he received the *Devil* with it. *Then entred Satan into* Judas, *Luke* 22. 3. A sad breach by which the *Devil* enters! *Judas being an evil Man* (saith *Augustin*) *received a good thing in a bad manner, and therefore the Enemy entred with it.* Aust. Tract. in *John* 17. 26. He that eats *unworthily*, and drinks *unworthily* at the Lords-Table, *eats and drinks damnation to himself* 1 Cor. 11. 29, 30. or, he eats & drinks *Judgment* as the Greek Word κρίμα may be rendred. God will shew his displeasure against such a man. The disorderly manner of attending this Ordinance was the cause, that amongst the *Cor. many were weak and sickly, and many slept*, yea slept their *last*.

The grounds of this Truth are these.

First, *all God's Law is Copulative.* And therefore the Commands *Deut.* 5. 17, 18 19. &c. are all expressed with a *Copulative*, joyning them together in a continued Connexion. לא תרצח ולא תנאף ולא תגנב *Thou shalt not Kill, and thou shalt not Commit Adultery, and thou shalt not Steal.* The breaking of one Command breaks the whole claim of the Law. Now the same Law of God that Commands Ordinances, Commands also the due Order in their Performance. In the Old Testament Sa-

crifi-

crifices, ſo much as the *Wood* muſt be laid in *order*, Lev. 1. 7, 8. Gen. 22. 9. how much more the *heart*, in thoſe Ordinances that are more purely Evangelical, and Spiritual? *That is not a good action perfectly wherein all the good qualities pertaining to it do not concur*; *Etjinas.* God expects perfection: *It ſhall be perfect, to be accepted: there ſhall be no blemiſh therein.* Lev. 22. 21. The Sacrifices indeed (being *Types* of Chriſt) did expreſs by their Perfection the neceſſity of Chriſt's *ſpotleſs* Holineſs, to render him an effectual propitiato y Sacrifice for us: yet though the like Perfection in our perſonal Righteouſneſs, be not neceſſary to our acceptation with God; it is notwithſtanding our duty: and the *wilful continued* neglect of it, is inconſiſtent with that ſincere obedience of Faith, without which our perſons & ſervices will not be accepted; no, not for *Chriſt's ſake*. Acceptation with God is no mean mercy, nor the leaſt to be aimed at in Holy Duties. *Abel* was bleſſed *with it*, when *Cain* went *without it*; which made *Cain's* heart boyl with envy, malice, and revenge: being ſenſible how much thereby *Abel* was a *better* & a *happier* Man than himſelf. This may ſuffice to demonſtrate and convince, that in our attending upon the Lord in his Ordinances,

it ſtands us upon to be greatly concerned in *their*, and eſpecially, *our* order and Frame: that we may avoid the breach and meet with the Bleſſing.

Uſe 1.

This ſerves to inform us, why it often fares ſo ill with us; in and after our ſeeking the Lord in his Ordinances. God hath promiſed to make his people joyful in his houſe of Prayer. Iſa. 56. 7. He hath Commanded to take, eat and drink his Body and Blood; and he hath annexed a bleſſing to it: But it may be thou meeteſt not with theſe bleſſings of joy, quicknings, growth in grace confidence in God, aſſurance of his favour. Is it without a cauſe? yea without a cauſe on *thy* part? Surely no, thy heart hath been out of a due order, thou haſt neglected God's Method, and therefore God hath neglected thee; or rebuked thee, and ſent thee away with a ſad, drooping, or (which is worſe) a dead Heart. The Table of the Lord hath written upon it to thee, *Perez Uzza* or rather *Perez Nepheſh* a breach on thy *Soul*. God's Ordinances are as effectual as ever, and God as Faithful as ever. Call thy Soul to account therefore; was there that Prayer, Humiliation, Repentance,

tance, quickning of thy Faith before hand; as ſhould have been? It not, thou knoweſt at whoſe door to lay the miſcarriage of the bleſſing.

Uſe 2.

This may teach us, not to ſatisfy our ſelves with the matter of Ordinances, or their formal outward exerciſe; but to look after whatever God requires therein. Men have a *high* eſteem of the Lord's Supper, and that *not* unworthily: but moſt have little regard to that Order of it, and their own Souls; that may bring down the benefit. Too many are open to the complaints of *Chriſoſtom ad Epiphan. Hom.* 3. *I ſee many that partake of the Sacrament inconſiderately and raſhly, more out of Cuſtom and Law than underſtanding. Times of receiving make not a worthy receiver, but the ſincerity and purity of the Soul, alwayes come with that, never without it.*

God will deal with ſuch diſorderly Communicants, according to the words in *Job* 20. 23. *When he is about to fill his belly, God ſhall caſt the fury of his Wrath upon him, and ſhall rain it upon him while he is eating.* Chriſt's Body and Blood *thus* ſawced, will be but *bitter* food. Who would have had

the *Israelites* meat, with the Wrath of God? *Psal.* 78. 29. An undue Order in the Lords Supper, makes that Table prepared for our *welfare* to become a trap and a *Snare*. *Psal.* 69. 22. *Haman's* jollity and brags met not with a sadder issue and disappointment, than their confidence is like to do; who rush on this Sacred Ordinance, without order or fear, The Banquet of *Wine* was the merryest part of the Feast, yet at that *Haman* drank the Sentence of *death*. The Lord will say to such as *Nabal* to *David's* Servants: Who are ye? & whence are ye? Shall I take my Sacramental Bread, my Sons Flesh and Blood which I have prepared for my Children, my *prepared* Guests, my Guests with their Wedding-Garments on: and give it to a company of persons, I know not whence they are? No, here is not for you, be gone, and meddle not, lest you meet with a Curse and not a Blessing. Therefore in the fear of God look to it, be no less conscientious, and solicitous of coming in a Holy Order, than of coming to a Holy Ordinance.

CHAP. II.

CHAP. II.

Of Preparation before the Sacrament, and the neceſſity of it.

IT will not be amiſs now to conſider, what is that *due* Order, that holy and ſpiritual Manner, after which the Lord is to be ſought in the Sacrament. This conſiſts eſpecially in three kinds of Duties: Firſt ſuch as go *before*, 2. ſuch as *accompany*, 3. ſuch as *follow after* receiving. The Duties before receiving, may paſs under the notion of Preparation, with which I ſhall begin.

Preparation as it is a means to get the Heart in order for the Lord's Table, ſo it is the firſt Duty in order to it. *Take heed to thy foot when thou comeſt into the Houſe of God*, Eccl. 5. 1. 'Tis ill *ſtumbling* at the *threſhold* of an Ordinance. But if ſuch heed muſt be taken when we come to the Houſe, how much more when we come to the Table of the Lord, where he *himſelf* ſits as *Maſter* of the Feaſt? *Sanctify your ſelves* (ſaith *Sam.*) *and come with me to the Sacrifice.* Sanctification is preparatory to Eating of the Sacrifice, and no leſs in our

feeding on that great Sacrifice for Sin, to which all the Mosaical were but shadows. It was a Saint-like saying of *David* Psal. 26. 6. *I will wash my hands in innocency, So will I compass thine Altar O Lord.* There is much in the Word *So, So let him Eat,* 1 Cor. 11. The preparation of the Passeover was a necessary and Solemn work, *Exod.* 12. 3. and that was the *Jews* Sacrament, by which they were minded of their being *passed by* in the destruction of the *first-born* of *Egypt*: but more especially of the deliverance from death and *Eternal* ruine, by the *Messias*, the Lamb slain from the beginning: of which deliverance and Passeover, that in *Egypt* was *a Type.* And it certainly teaches us, that Preparation is no less necessary to the eating Christ *our* Passeover by Faith, in the Gospel-Sacrament; to do which after a due Spiritual manner, is much more *difficult*, as the Gospel-Sacrament is a much more *excellent*, and Spiritual Ordinance.

When we are invited to our Neighbours Table, how do we deck and spruce our selves? Our ordinary apparel and attire will not serve our turn: and is the *Lord's* Table a more *despicable* thing? Or our uncommely raiment at his Comunion *less distastful* to him, or dishonourable both to

to him and our ſelves? It cannot be thought ſo by any that underſtand. Too many are as ignorantly bold in this as the Diſciples in another caſe. *Are you able* (ſaith Chriſt) *to drink of the Cup that I ſhall drink of?* We know how roundly, but raſhly they anſwered, *We are able*, Mat. 20. 22. So many poor wrethes, if we ask them, Are ye able? are ye fit to receive Chriſt in the Supper? They are ſo confident of their worthineſs and ability, that they are offended at the very *Queſtion*: whereas the Lord knows they never yet beſtowed one poor hour in *examining* their ſtate, and preparing their hearts for ſo *ſolemn* a work. Our Lord Jeſus bids the *Phariſees Waſh the inſide of the Cup, that the outſide of the Cup may be clean alſo*. But many (eſpecially of the common young or time-ſerving Receivers) take the quite *contrary* courſe; and think if all be trim *without*, no care need be taken about the ſpots and pollutions *within*: but Chriſt the Lord of the Feaſt hath *too* Spiritual and piercing an Eye, to be put of with a cleanneſs that is not ſo much as *skin*-deep, much leſs Heart and Soul-deep. To quicken us to this Preparation conſider theſe things:

Firſt, *According to a man's Preparation will be his profit.* Preparation is the *Seed*, recei-

receiving the *Harveſt*. He that ſowes *nothing* reaps *nothing*; and he that ſowes ſparingly, ſhall reap *ſparingly*. 'Tis in receiving as in *Praying*, he that *prepares* his his Heart to pray, finds God with a *ready* Ear. *Pſal.* 10. 17. God enlargeth his Hand to Receivers, as their hearts are *enlarged* to receive. *Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it*, Pſal. 81. 10. If ever we are ſtraitned in our bleſſings at the Lord's Table, 'tis not from the ſtraitneſs of *God's* Heart or Hand, but of our *own* Bowels. *Fill the Mens ſacks with food aſmuch as they can carry*, Gen. 44. 1. ſaith *Joſeph* of his Brethren. How much more will our Jeſus be liberal, according to the largeneſs of heart we bring with us? *Sacraments are the mines of Grace, holy diſpoſitions are our little Veſſels; the larger our diſpoſitions and holy affections are, the greater bleſſing ſhall we carry away with us from theſe mines of bleſſing.* Euſeb. Nierem.

Secondly, *We come in this Ordinance to meet and ſerve God.* Whether we are to meet God in a way of Judgment or Mercy, that Exhortation holds *Prepare to meet thy God O* Iſrael Amos 4. 12. In caſes of *Judgment* and diſpleaſure, God will meet with men though they be *not* prepared, yea *becauſe* they prepare not: but in caſe of a bleſſing;

no

no preparation, no meeting. *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you*, Jam. 4. There muſt be a mutual drawing near, if ever God and the Soul *meet*. *Now ye have conſecrated your ſelves to the Lord, come near and bring your Sacrifices*, 2 Chron. 29. 31. Conſecration to God is the higheſt preparation, it includes Faith, Love, Repentance, Truſt; without which no man can devote and ſeparate himſelf to be the Lord's. And where this Conſecration to Chriſt makes us his, and we are ſenſible of it, and wiſe to improve it, it will be an eaſie matter for Faith to ſay *my beloved is mine:* and this well proved and applyed, a door is wide open to all the fruits which grow on that Tree of Life.

Thirdly, *To Prepare our ſelves Religiouſly, is a comfortable ſign of uprightneſs and ſincerity of heart.* The *Levites* were more ready to Sanctify themſelves for the Paſſe-over than the Prieſts. 2 *Chron.* 29. 34. The reaſon given was this, *becauſe they were more upright in heart.* Therefore it follows, that the more upright in heart in the Lord's Ordinance, the more ready and diligent ſhall we be in preparation. This is alſo fruitful of another bleſſing, expreſſed in *David's* Prayer, *Do good O Lord, to thoſe that*

that be good; and to them that are upright in heart.

Fourthly, *No man can come ſo worthily as he ought.* Do we what we can, *too much* dulneſs, deadneſs and diſtraction will be our Companions; and ſuch as will not wholly be ſhaken of. But yet this is our encouragement, that if the Lord ſees a man *ſet* himſelf *ſeriouſly* to a preparation, he will bear with many failings. 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19. Many had eaten the Paſſeover in an undue manner, they wanted ſome ceremonial cleanſings; and no doubt but their hearts had their ſpots and defects too. Yet *Hezekiah* prayes, *The good Lord pardon every one that prepares his heart to ſeek God, the Lord God of his Fathers; though he be not cleanſed according to the preparation of the Sanctuary.* And what was the ſucceſs of this Prayer, *verſe* 20, 21. *And the Lord healed the People; and they kept the Feaſt with gladneſs.* Behold how gracious the Lord is, to ſuch whoſe hearts are *ſet* on preparation for his Ordinances. Here was Gods *ſervice* ſet in order, and the *hearts* of his Servants ſet in order: and it follows, Hezekiah *and all the people rejoyced.*

CHAP. III.

CHAP. III.

Of the great danger of coming to the Lord's Supper without Preparation.

THE things already offered might be ſufficient, but becauſe our careleſs withdrawing Hearts are not eaſily prevail'd on; we ſhall try what fear or ſhame may contribute to this duty. Firſt, *it is matter of ſhame. Auſtin* upbraids the unreaſonableneſs of thoſe, who would be aſhamed of filth and tatters at a great man's Table, and yet bluſh not at their ſinful pollutions and beggary at the Lord's Table. *Serm.* 151 *de Temp.* Conſider 2 *Chron.* 30. 15. *The* Prieſts *and the* Levites *were aſhamed, and Sanctified themſelves.* They were aſhamed for the newneſs of the Work, at which 'tis like they both bluſhed and bungled in the face of a *multitude* of People: but chiefly, that through their ignorance and unfaithfulneſs it had been ſo long diſcontinued. We cannot away with foul cloaths and Veſſels at *our* Tables, and will God away with foul *hearts*? O be aſhamed to bring ſuch

ſuch veſſels, to receive the wine and milk of Spiritual Mercies into. Let not God & your own Souls, be ſo ill ſerved and reſpected.

Secondly, *'Tis a matter of great danger* And the dangers are theſe that follow. First, *Whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily, ſhall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.* Theſe are the Apoſtles Words, 1 *Cor.* 15. 27. What is this, but in ſtead of becoming guiltleſs *by* the Death of Chriſt, to become guilty *of* the Death of Chriſts Blood? Inſtead of drinking the Cordial of Chriſt's Blood, to ſhed Chriſt's Blood? A Sin that will be more heavy than all others, as 'tis a Sin againſt, and contempt of the remedy. *Deliver me from Blood-guiltineſs* cries *David*, Pſal. 51. The guilt of man's blood is a heavy burthen, what then is the guilt of the Blood of Chriſt, the Blood of God? 'Tis well for Sinners that there is virtue enough in Chriſt's Blood, to waſh away the guilt of Chriſt's Blood: *Acts* 2. or how many had made their miſery incurable, by abuſing the Phyſitian! yea well for Saints too, who though as Saints have a right to Chriſt in the Sacraments; yet in the manner of receiving contract guilt too often on their Souls, which nothing without the Chriſt they diſhonour can do away

away. *His Blood be upon us and upon our Children* was a dreadful imprecation of the Chriſt-crucifying *Jews*, whoſe dire effects hath taken hold of their poſterity for ſixteen hundred years already. O take heed above all things of having Chriſt's B'ood crying out againſt thee! *Chriſt*'s Blood duly applyed by Faith ſpeaks better things than the Blood of *Abel*; but if abuſed, cries more loud for a more terrible revenge. Well then might *Chryſ.* reſolve thus, *I will rather give my life, than I will give the Body of Chriſt to any unworthy perſon: yea I will rather ſuffer my own blood to be ſhed, than I will give that moſt Holy Blood to the unworthy.*

The Second danger is, *That an unprepared perſon not only receives no good, but much hurt to his Soul.* God blaſts his Ordinance to ſuch a one. *Bring no more vain Oblations.* Iſa. 1. 13. *Vain*, not only as not acceptable to God, but alſo as unprofitable to them. They are *vain things which cannot profit.* 1 Sam. 12. 21. The ſame curſe is upon an unworthy receiver that was on that Lord of *Samaria.* 2 Kings 7. 2. *Behold thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eyes, but ſhalt not eat thereof.* He that appears empty before the Lord, ſhall go away as empty as he comes. An unprepared & unworthy receiver may think he eats Chriſt's Fleſh

Flesh and drinks Christ's Blood, but he is but in a *dream*, according to those *Isa.* 29. 8. When he awakes he will behold his Soul empty; he is neither the fatter fairer nor stronger, for his *festival* dream. *Cyprian de Cæna Dom.* speaks to the purpose, *The Sacrament is never without its proper virtue, nor is the Majesty of God absent from his Holy Mysteries, yet they cannot partake of the holy Spirit of the Ordinance, whose unbelief or unworthiness is a contradiction to so Holy a thing.*

But moreover, where no good is gotten by Ordinances, it cannot be without *hurt*; we must be either the *better* or the *worse*. This was the *Corinthians* sin & misery: they *came together* to this Ordinance, *not for the better, but for the worse*, 1 Cor. 11. 17. There is a *double* Spiritual danger in receiving the Spiritual Sacrament disorderly and unworthily. First, Instead of receiving Christ we receive Satan, of this we spake before. 'Tis the way to receive Satans power to a greater *hardning*. Satan no doubt possessed *Judas* before he was one of *his* Subjects: but after the Sop, Satan took a more *full* possession. The greatest *villany* that was ever acted on the stage of the World, did not stick with him *now*. To rise up from the Lord's Table with greater

greater *greedineſs* and eagerneſs to Sin, is an aggravating circumſtance, and a Judgment unexpreſſibly ſore. If thy heart tremble at the thoughts of ſuch an iſſue to this bleſſed Ordinance, let it tremble no leſs at the *cauſe*; an unworthy, neglected, unprepared heart.

A Second ſpiritual danger, is *a receiving Judgment and condemnation to our ſelves.* 1 Cor. 11 29. The Paſchal Lamb muſt not be eaten raw. *Exod.* 12. 9. *Uzzah's* good *intention* in ſupporting the Ark, could not ſave him from the puniſhment of his diſorder. Unpreparedneſs puts *death* into the pot. The Emperour *Henry* the 7*th*, was poyſoned in the Bread of the Sacrament by a treacherous *Monk*, for his not being ſo flexible to the *Roman* Yoke, as the proud *Pope* expected. And Pope *Victor* the 2*d* had the ſame entertainment from his Sub-*Deacon* in the Cup of the Sacrament. The improvement I aim at in theſe paſſages, is to ſhew that Sacramental Bread and Wine may be death to the receivers Souls by their own treachery, as they were to thoſe great Men's Bodies, by the treachery and villany of their *Popiſh* Prieſts.

The Phyſitian (ſaith Auſt.) *doth not adminiſter poyſon, but health; but an unworthy receiving renders it ruinous.* The Devil would

Flesh and drinks Christ's Blood, but he
but in a *dream*, according to [illegible]

NOTE

This volume
tight binding ar
effort has been
duce the centre
result in

[illegible] up from the Lord's Table w
grea

greater *greedineſs* and eagerneſs to Sin, is

me has a very

and while every

en made to repro-

tres, force would

in damage

receiving renders it ruinous. The Devil would

Fleſh and drinks Chriſt's Blood, but he is but in a *dream*, according to thoſe *Iſa.* 20. 8. When he awakes he will behold his Soul empty; he is neither the fatter fairer nor ſtronger, for his *feſtival* dream. *Cyprian de Cæna Dom.* ſpeaks to the purpoſe, *The Sacrament is never without its proper virtue, nor is the Majeſty of God abſent from his Holy Myſteries, yet they cannot partake of the holy Spirit of the Ordinance, whoſe unbelief or unworthineſs is a contradiction to ſo Holy a thing.*

But moreover, where no good is gotten by Ordinances, it cannot be without *hurt*; we muſt be either the *better* or the *worſe*. This was the *Corinthians* ſin & miſery: they *came together* to this Ordinance, *not for the better, but for the worſe*, 1 Cor. 11. 17. There is a *double* Spiritual danger in receiving the Spiritual Sacrament diſorderly and unworthily. Firſt, Inſtead of receiving Chriſt we receive Satan, of this we ſpake before. 'Tis the way to receive Satans power to a greater *hardning*. Satan no doubt poſſeſſed *Judas* before he was one of *his* Subjects: but after the Sop, Satan took a more *full* poſſeſſion. The greateſt *villany* that was ever acted on the ſtage of the World, did not ſtick with him *now*. To riſe up from the Lord's Table with greater

greater *greedineſs* and eagerneſs to Sin, is an aggravating circumſtance, and a Judgment unexpreſſibly ſore. If thy heart tremble at the thoughts of ſuch an iſſue to this bleſſed Ordinance, let it tremble no leſs at the *cauſe*; an unworthy, neglected, unprepared heart.

A Second ſpiritual danger, is *a receiving Judgment and condemnation to our ſelves.* 1 Cor. 11. 29. The Paſchal Lamb muſt not be eaten raw. *Exod.* 12. 9. *Uzzah's* good *intention* in ſupporting the Ark, could not ſave him from the puniſhment of his diſorder. Unpreparedneſs puts *death* into the pot. The Emperour *Henry* the *7th*, was poyſoned in the Bread of the Sacrament by a treacherous *Monk*, for his not being ſo flexible to the *Roman* Yoke, as the proud *Pope* expected. And Pope *Victor* the *2d* had the ſame entertainment from his Sub-*Deacon* in the Cup of the Sacrament. The improvement I aim at in theſe paſſages, is to ſhew that Sacramental Bread and Wine may be death to the receivers Souls by their own treachery, as they were to thoſe great Men's Bodies, by the treachery and villany of their *Popiſh* Prieſts.

The Phyſitian (ſaith Auſt.) *doth not adminiſter poyſon, but health; but an unworthy receiving renders it ruinous.* The Devil would

would have had our Saviour turn *Stones* into *Bread*, but unworthy Receivers turn the Bread of the best life into *Stones*. They take not up the Cup of *Salvation*, but of *Damnation*. But that no sincere humble Soul may construe this head to their discouragement, and *unnecessary* trouble: consider, that although every sin deserve *Eternal* damnation, yet no sin repented of *Evangelically* shall condemn. Secondly, that the Word κρίμα signifies *Judgment*, as well *Temporal*, as Spiritual or Eternal: so that the Sense is, they provoke God to afflict and send down his Judgments upon them. Thirdly; that the unworthy receiving which the Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 11. so severely rebukes, is not to be understood of those infirmities which *ordinarily* cleave to God's dearest and tender-hearted Children, notwithstanding their sincere care and watchfulness: but of those *gross* disorders, and such-like mentioned in that Chapter, which were a high profanation and *contempt* of this Holy Ordinance. Gospel-Worship and Services are not such *severe* things, as to be accompanied with such terrible apprehensions; where the heart is upright and reverent in their performance.

The third danger is of Judgments on the Body:

Sickneſs, Weakneſs, yea Death it ſelf. *For this cauſe many are ſickly among you, and many are weak, and many ſleep*, 1 Cor. 11. 30. Some think it was the peſtilence that God ſent amongſt them; but at leaſt, it was ſome *extraordinary* and ſignal mortality. This unworthy receiving may be the cauſe of *Bodily* Judgments, where men little think of it: For God hath the *ſame* jealous Eye over his Ordinances as then; and his Glory concerned in their due attendance, is as *dear* to him. *If we would judg our ſelves* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *we ſhould not be judged*, 1 Cor. 11. 31. That is, if we would try and *cenſure* our ſelves, we ſhould avoid the puniſhment, even that puniſhment and condemnation by which God chaſtiſes his People for their groſs miſcarriages, that they might repent, reform, and not periſh eternally: as appears by the next verſe. *But when we are judged* (or puniſhed as ſome read it) *we are chaſtned of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the World.*

Some there are who regard not *Spiritual* Judgments, yet are tender enough of their *Bodily* welfare: let temporal dangers make ſuch look about them. When God caſt *Adam* out of *Paradiſe*, he ſet an Angel with a flaming Sword to prevent his re-

entry;

entry; if he had presumed, he had run upon his own death. Let not those menaces which God presents in his *Word* to you, meet with less regard. I shall give you here a few instances of God's vengeance upon the high, and *contumacious* Prophaners of this Ordinance. *Julian*, Unkle to *Julian* the Apostate and *Emperour* Pissed on the Communion-Table, and *smote Enzoius* the Bishop for reproving him; saying also that *the Divine providence took no care at all of Christians' affairs*: but God gave him the *lye*, by making his excrements forsake the *common* passages of nature, and pass through that wicked mouth that had so abused him, his people, and Ordinance. *Cent. Magdeb.* Cent 4. C. 3. Some of the *Donatists* that cast the Consecrated Bread to Dogs, were *themselves* devoured by Dogs. One *Booth* a Batchelor of arts in St. *John's* Col. Camb. being Popishly affected; reserved the Sacrament, and threw it over the Colledg-Wall in *scorn*: but God so rebuked his Conscience, that shortly after, he in anguish threw himself over the Battlements of the Chappel, and in few hours after ended his life. This the Bishop of *Durham* reports on his own knowledg, in his Book of *the Institution of Sacraments*, Lib. 5. C. 3. Sect. 5. Although

though these were Sinners of an other kind than *unworthy* receivers, yet the *jealous* Eye of God over this Ordinance, may teach us not to provoke him by its abuse in any manner or *measure*.

Fourthly; Yet consider *that it is a very dangerous thing for those who fear God, to neglect attending on this Ordinance.* While others receive unworthily, they who neglect it, do *constructively* condemn it as *unworthy* to be received. The Sentence against such who neglected the Passover was *severe*. *But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbears to keep the Passeover; even the same soul shall be cut off from his people: because he brought not the Offering of the Lord in his appointed season; that man shall bear his sin*, Numb. 9. 13. How hard went it with these, *Mat.* 25. 5, 7. who being invited came not to the Supper? 'Tis very dangerous to reject or *neglect* the Lord's bounty. There is a punishment for them who *ought* to come, and come *not*; aswel as for those who come not as they *ought*: for a *prophane* absence, aswel as for an *unprepared* presence.

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. IV,

Of habitual and actual Preparation in general, and of the neceſſity of knowledg in a Communicant.

THE Preparation required before the Sacrament is two-fold, *Habitual*, and *Actual*. *Habitual* ſtands in having all ſuch gracious diſpoſitions, as qualify for the work of receiving; *Actual* in the *awakening* thoſe diſpoſitions to a readineſs for exerciſe: both theſe muſt be in him that will receive in due Order. It is here as in *Preaching*; a Preacher ought to have ſuch gifts, graces & abilities as may furniſh him for his Miniſterial work; he muſt be a man well-read and ſtudied, and of competent learning: yet he that is *thus* accompliſhed ought not *ordinarily*, without any ſtudy ſtep into the Pulpit, take a Text, and utter himſelf at all *adventure*: But beſides his Habitual preparation, an underſtanding and ſerious Miniſter who knows the weight and difficulty of his work, will take ſpecial pains by Study and Prayer to fit him for every particular, and *occaſional* exerciſe of his *Habitual* fitneſs and qualifications.

cations. *Every Scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, bringeth out of his treasure things new and old*, Mat. 13. 52. He hath a *treasure*, there is his Habitual preparation; he brings it *forth*, first by study or Meditation ere he preaches it to the People, there is his Actual Preparation. Without *Habitual* preparation his Sermons would prove poor *empty* stuff or *worse*, without *Actual* he not only *tempts* God (if he have opportunity) but 'tis ten to one his products will be wild and confused, such as the words of that Prophesie well agree to, *Zech.* 13. 4. *It shall come to pass in that day, that the Prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath Prophesied.*

Mark how the Ruler of the Synagogue spake to *Paul* and his Companions, *Acts* 13. 15. *Ye Men and Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the People, say on.* As if he had said, if ye be *provided* of a Sermon, if ye have any Meditations *ready*, bestow them on the People. He did not tempt them to vent whatever came next in extempory *indigested* effusions. So the Apostle exhorted *Timothy* to *Study to shew* himself *approved a Work-man that needs not to be ashamed*; 2 Tim. 2. 15. To apply these things to the case in hand,

there must be in all Holy duties both Habitual and Actual preparation, or the success of the Troops of *Tema* will be the Issue, *Job* 6. 19, 20. *The Troops of* Tema *looked, and the companies of* Sheba *waited for them; they were confounded, because they had hoped, they came thither and were ashamed.* It is also to be understood, that Habitual preparation must be had in the *first* place, without which there can be no *Actual* preparation; any more than a readiness to work without Hands or Tools. I now proceed to those particular Graces, wherein consists the *Habitual* preparation for receiving this holy and blessed Ordinance: among others I shall take notice of these five, *viz. Knowledg, Faith, Repentance, Charity, Obedience.* The want of any of these, will render a Person unworthy and disorderly in the attendance on this Sacred Ordinance.

The necessity of knowledg in a Worthy Communicant.

THE Apostle renders defective *Knowledg* in a Communicant no small crime, where the defect is such as is inconsistent with the due and sacred apprehension of so solemn an Ordinance. *Not dis-*

diſcerning the Lord's Body, 1 Cor. 11. 29. (*i e*) not diſtinguiſhing between the Elements in the Sacraments, and *common* food: or not having an underſtanding and ſenſe of the *ends*, and *benefits* of a Crucified Jeſus, *exhibited* in the Lord's Supper. This defect muſt needs be, where there remains a *deep* ignorance of the very *fundamentals* of Religion. There can be no competent underſtanding of Chriſt in this Ordinance, where there is a *groſs* ignorance of Sin and its defilements and its merits, the Fall of mankind in the firſt ſin of our firſt Parents, and of our ſelves in particular by our perſonal ſins, the Redemption by Chriſt's active and paſſive obedience to Sanctification and Salvation; a reunion with God, a Communion with him and all Saints, who are the members of Chriſt and one of another; a conſcientious, grateful, and cheerful Devotedneſs to the Lord, in in all thoſe wayes of obedience commanded and directed to in his Holy Word.

That a competent Knowledg is neceſſary to due receiving, will appear by theſe following reaſons. Firſt, *The Lord prizes Knowledg above the outward acts of his ſervice.* If Knowledg and ſome Ordinances might be ſeparated, as ſometimes they have been of *neceſſity*, as in caſes of perſecution, exile,

ſickneſs: the ſanctifying Knowledg of God without thoſe Ordinances, weighs more with him; than the external performance of them without Knowledg. *I deſired the Knowledg of God more than burnt-Offerings*, Hoſ. 6. 6. To know God and Chriſt, or God in Chriſt is Eternal Life, *Joh.* 17. 3. this may be where God hath not given opportunities of receiving Chriſt in the Sacrament; but 'tis no-where ſaid that the outward acts of *this* or any *other* Ordinance is Eternal Life.

Secondly, *A Man ſhould receive the Supper with ſuch a frame as he would be fit to dye in.* For a man to *dye* without the *Knowledg* of God and Chriſt is a woful thing, and expreſſed as a curſe that cuts off all bleſſings or hopes at one blow. *They ſhall dye without Knowledg*, Job 36. 12. It is no leſs evil than *ye ſhall dy in your ſins*, Joh. 8. 21. What makes a man unfit to dye, makes a man unfit to receive; and what-ever ſtate is dangerous to dye in, is dangerous to receive in.

The third reaſon is, *From the ends of our coming to this Feaſt*, and that is Communion with God. Without *Communion* with God, this Ordinance is an *empty* thing. And what Communion can there be

be without Knowledg? Where the Knowledg of God is wanting, Men can be no better than ſtrangers to him. *Alienated from the Life of God, through the ignorance that is in them*, Epheſ. 4. 18. A Man may have Knowledg and no Communion, but a man can have no Communion with God without Knowledg. *This is the Covenant which I will make with the Houſe of Iſrael after thoſe days, ſaith the Lord: I will put my Laws into their mind, and write it on their heart, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* The ſubſtance of the good of the Covenant, mutual Intereſt, and Communion, depends on the *Holy Knowledg* of God,

A fourth Reaſon is, from *The unfitneſs to receive without Knowledg.* Where a man is without Knowledg, he is out of *Covenant* with God. Not a Perſon in Covenant but is taught of God. *They ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them to the greateſt of them*, Heb. 8. 11. All God's Children are Diſciples, and ſuch Diſciples who have learned Chriſt in ſome good meaſure; though they are never *too old* or *too wiſe* to learn more. Now this Ordinance is a ſealing Ordinance, 'tis a Seal of the Covenant; and they who are not Intereſſed in the Covenant are utterly uncapable of its

Seal: the Seal would be no better to them than a Seal on a paper that hath *nothing* written on't.

Secondly, *None are fit but such as are Members of Christ; and no such ignorant persons are Members of Christ.* Where-ever the Gospel joyns the Soul to Christ, 'tis by beams of *light*, as well as by flames of *love*. *To turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God*, Acts 26. 18. Now are such fit for the Lord's Table, who are the Devil's subjects and vassals; and who not being Members of his Body have no Communion in that Life and Vertue conveyed by this Spiritual Ordinance, from Christ as their Head and Heart? The Blessings of the Blood of Christ keeps its circulation within his Mystical Body, as common blood doth in the Natural: if it be let out of the Body, it grows cold and lifeless.

Thirdly, *Ignorant persons are Lepers.* The Law denied civil Society to a Leper, and Ignorance is the hight of Spiritual Leprosie. Levit. 13. 44. *The Priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean, the plague is in his Head.* There are two things that shut out ignorant Persons from this Ordinance; first, *such are Children yea and Fools too, which is worse.* A Child or a Fool can neither

neither examine himſelf, nor is capable of giving ſatisfaction to the Miniſter; both which are neceſſary to ſalve the conſcience of him that Adminiſters, and him that receives. *Let a man examine himſelf, and ſo let him come.* And ſecondly, *No ignorant Perſon can come with a good mind.* Now to bring an offering with an ill mind, is an abomination to the Lord, *Prov.* 21. 27. Ignorant Perſons will plead their good *meanings*, and good *hearts* come not ſhort of thoſe who have better heads: *true*, where there is ſome competency of knowledg *ſanctified*; a Woman, a Child may have a better heart and *devotion*, than the moſt Eagle-ey'd Perſon in the *notions* of Godlineſs, where the heart is yet carnal: but where ignorance is ſo groſs, as not to admit *ſome* knowledg of the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God, that Text is applicable, *Without Knowledg the mind is not good*, Prov. 19. 2. The firſt thing that God called *good* in the creation was *Light*, and after that *all* he made was good. Before that, though there was a vaſtneſs of *matter*, yet it was without form and *void*: Void of goodneſs beauty or uſe. Therefore let all ignorant Souls take heed what they do, in preſuming themſelves without warrant or fitneſs, or cenſuring their *faith-*

ful Miniſters for excluding them: they are your *Eyes*, your Seers, if they ſee the danger and warn you, it will rather become you to conſider with *ſelf* ſuſpicion, than to ſtorm at their faithfulneſs, as if it were an affront to your worth. O the *Pride* of Man! who ſcorns to be judged *ignorant*, and yet ſcorns or loaths as much to be *taught*, who will needs be thought fit for the higheſt Myſteries of the Goſpel, and yet never thought good to take ſo much pains as to underſtand the A B C of Religion. *What haſt thou* of all Men *to do, to take my Covenant into thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt Inſtruction*, Pſal. 50. 16, 17. If not the Words, how much leſs the Seal of the Covenant.

CHAP. V.

Of the neceſſity of Faith in him who may be a Worthy Receiver.

FAith is the *Heart*-purifying Grace, that diſpoſes to draw near to God, fits for acceptance with him, and takes hold of the pure bleſſings of his Ordinances. The Lord throws all the formal ſervices, tendred with polluted hearts into the faces of their

their offerers. Isa. 1. 11. *To what purpose is the multitude of your Sacrifices?* —— *I cannot away with your new-Moons*, &c. Why? What was the matter? did not God require them? Was he weary of his own Worship? Did he hate his own Ordinances? No, but they offered them with polluted hearts. God bids them therefore V. 16. 18. *Wash you, make you clean* — *come now &c.* But how should they *Wash* except by *Faith* in the Blood of Christ, which purges from the guilt and filth of sin. *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith; having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience &c.* It is no less sin to come *without* Faith, than not to come at *all*. However freely God offers his favours, if we want Faith, we have no *hand* (or if you will) no *heart* to receive them. The whole action of a Christian in this Ordinance, is but Faith *appropriating* and *applying* the blessings there tendred, and what results from thence. Only mistake not this belief for a meer perswasion of your Interest, but rather take it for an open heart to *receive* Christ as tendred in the Covenant: the perswasion of your Interest and its comforts will follow from the evidence of your *such* willingness. And also observe, that as this Ordinance is called

led the Communion, ſo it includes a reciprocal and *mutual* donation: Chriſt gives *himſelf* to the ſoul, and Faith receives him: and the ſame Faith gives the Soul to Chriſt *again*, and thereby all it is or hath. Faith hath *two* hands, one to receive, another to give: 'tis not a ſelfiſh thing. At this Holy Feaſt, the Cheer is made up betwixt Chriſt and Believers: Believers Feaſt on Chriſt's Benefits, and Chriſt feeds on Believers Graces, all of which (eſpecially Faith) labour and lay out all, on, and for their deareſt Lord and Redeemer. How all this can be performed without true Faith, is a riddle not ſolved in the Scriptures.

This Righteouſneſs is the *wedding*-Garment, and the acts of Faith dreſs the Soul with the varieties of glory, which are the fruits and conſequences of it. To come without this Wedding-Garment produces a ſentence of death, to come with it (as every gracious Soul is never without it in its worſt ſtate) but not in exerciſe or improved, will meet with a *hidden* face from God, or a *frown*. In the parable *Mat.* 22. 4, 5. The Lord ſpies out *one* not having on the *Wedding*-Garment; and though he calls him *friend* he fares little the better for that; his entertainment is binding hand and foot, and caſting into utter darkneſs.

The

The ſpecial things to my purpoſe obſervable in this Parable are, when the Gueſts were come, the King comes in to *ſee* them. The Lord keeps not *open* houſe *here* as in preaching the Word *all* are invited to entertain the *Goſpel*, and thereby to come into the Dominion and Protection of Chriſt: but all are not invited to *this* Supper. Chriſt calls them by name, I mean his *Children*, his *Saints*, who have *already* put on Chriſt in obedience to the Goſpel-call: if any other *intrude* Chriſt knows his own, he can miſs any *one* that ſhould be there, and take notice of his place being empty: and he alſo can find out and will, if there be but one that is not of the number of his ſheep in *thoſe* paſtures. The neceſſity of Faith in this Ordinance, I ſhall farther evidence in the following conſiderations.

Firſt, *No duty is acceptable to God without Faith.* Better abſent than preſent where not *accepted.* By Faith *Abel* and his Offering was accepted, *Gen.* 4. 4. *Heb.* 11. 4. While faithleſs *Cain's* found no regard from God. He was not pleaſed with all alike who *eat of the ſame Spiritual meat, and drank of the ſame Spiritual drink,* 1 Cor. 10. 3, 4, 5. 'Tis Faith in the habit and exer-

exercise that makes the difference for the better.

Secondly, *Our end in receiving should be to partake of Christ's Body and Blood:* but this cannot be without Faith. Popish Transubstantiation is a meer *Blasphemous fiction*, that so joyns the Body and Blood of Christ to the Bread and Wine, or rather pretends so to turn them into the very Body and Blood of Christ, that be a man never so wicked, were he an *Infidel, Turk or Jew*; if he swallow the accidents as the Papists call them, he receives the Body and Blood of Christ. *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence &c.* Heb. 3. 14. τὴν ὑποστάσεως μέχρι *the beginning of our Substance*, (i. e.) our Faith, or that Trust in Christ by which we were encouraged to cast our selves upon him as Lord and Saviour: to expect Salvation from Christ in the wayes of the Obedience of Faith; which is the *Substantial* Christianity: A Christianity and Saintship that hath more in it, than a *name* and *form* of Godliness. This *Substance* of Faith is necessary to a *partaking* of Christ, *real* Christ, Christ *effectual*.

First, *We cannot partake of Christ in the Supper without Faith*, for he that receives Christ must have an eye to discern his worth,

worth, and excellency; a Heart to come to him, a Hand to receive him, a Taſte to reliſh and ſavour him: all theſe *Faith* is to the Soul, and without Faith it is *deſtitute* of *all* theſe helps. *Look unto me and be ſaved*, Iſa. 45. 22. This word *look*, denotes a having reſpect to Chriſt in all his ſaving properties. *As many as received him*, John 1. 12. is continued in the following words, *to as many as believed on his Name*: So that receiving Chriſt, is the very act of Faith; or rather Faith it ſelf. Chriſt is a rich Treaſury, all we want is to be had in, and from him: He is Gold, Raiment, Eye-Salve; if we will have theſe bleſſings, Faith is all the purchaſe on *our* parts; and nothing without it will procure the leaſt ſhare in Chriſt, who is the Subſtance, the All of Ordinances.

Secondly, *We ought not to attempt to partake of Chriſt in the Supper, till we are intereſted in Chriſt by Faith.* None were to eat of the Sin-Offering but the *Prieſts*. All Believers, and none but Believers are *Prieſts* to God. *Ye are an holy Prieſt-hood*, 1 Pet. 2. 5. But how came they to be Prieſts? it was by coming to Chriſt by *Faith*. Verſe 4. *To whom coming*. So alſo none but God's Children have a right to Chriſt, and none can be *Children* without Faith. *To*

as many as received him, he gave this priviledg; to become the Sons of God. John 1. 12. that is, *to as many as believed. Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus,* Gal. 3. 16. God will not cast the Childrens Bread to Dogs: crums of temporary and *carnal* comforts must serve their turns. 'Tis only the houshold of Faith, who have *right* to that Table; where the Lord Jesus is not only the *Master*, but also the *Matter* of the Feast.

Thirdly, consider *the danger of coming without Faith. First, Without Faith, the Heart is not only in a polluted, but also in a polluting state.* Every Person in an unregenerate state pollutes all the Ordinances he is exercised about, (though not to others yet) to himself. Where holy Ordinances have not Sanctified defiled persons, they will defile Holy Ordinances. In the Ceremonial Law, a Person defiled by a dead body touching holy Flesh, (*i. e.*) of the Sacrifice made it unclean thereby, *Hag.* 2. 13. This is farther improved verse 14. *So is this People, and so is this Nation before me, saith the Lord; and so is the work of their hands, and that which they offer there is unclean.* What *safety*, much less *encouragement* can a Man expect from God, who

defiles

defiles that Ordinance of God, wherein he hopes for a Bleſſing?

Secondly, *Coming without Faith makes our coming abominable to God.* All ſervice performed out of Chriſt is *loathſom.* The *Altar* ſanctifies the Gift. The Sacrifices not brought to the door of the Tabernacle, and their blood Sprinkled on the Altar, were called by God *Sacrifices unto Devils*, Lev. 17. 6, 7. Who is the Altar, and the Door of Sanctification and Acceptation, but the Lord Jeſus intended by thoſe Types? The Lord ſaith in this caſe, as *Joſeph* to his Brethren; ye ſhall not ſee my Face except you bring your Brother *Benjamin* with you; ſo God will *hide* his Face from, or *frown* on all ſuch as come to this Table to feed on Chriſt, and thereby to ſee the light of God's Countenance, unleſs by faith we bring Chriſt alſo with us in point of *Intereſt.*

Thirdly, *The ſtate of unbelief is a ſtate of Spiritual death.* An unbeliever is a *dead* man, or a *dead* Woman. *I live by the Faith of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. *As where the Soul is not in the Body, the Body is dead; ſo where the Soul is without Faith, the Soul is dead.ſaith* Auſt. *Tract. in* Johan. Can you think it a ſmall provocation, to bring a dead carcaſe to a *Feaſt*? And is it

leſs

leſs to bring a dead *Soul* to the Lord's Table? A dead Soul, whoſe corruption is ſo much the more *loathſome*, as it is *Spiritual?*

Fourthly, *Unbelief takes away the force and virtue of the Ordinance.* If thou come to it *lifeleſs* by Unbelief, it will prove a *dead* Ordinance to thee.

Chriſt will ſay in this Ordinance to the Soul, as he ſaid to the Centurion, Mat. 1. 13. *As thou haſt believed*: and as to the Blind Man, Mat. 9. 29. *Be it unto thee according to thy Faith.* Such a word to a Man *full* of Faith, would be a word full of *Bleſſing*: but to a man utterly void of Faith, a cutting off from *all* Bleſſings by it. To receive Chriſt, and with him Grace, Comfort and Glory; is neither thy *deſire* nor expectation from God: and none of theſe things ſhall be unto *thee.* Chriſt in the Sacrament ſhall be to ſuch a Soul (as to the legally Circumciſed as *Paul* ſpeaks) *of none effect.* Unbelief doth as it were *ſhut* the Hands of Chriſt, and *bind* his bowels from compaſſion. *He could do no mighty work there*, Mark 6. 5, 6. the reaſon is given to be *their unbelief*, verſe 7. Chriſt could have done aſmuch there as elſewhere; but he ſeems in a manner, to put himſelf under the *Law* of *others* Faith.

The

The Sacrament received without Faith, is received without force or fruit. 'Tis with this as with the Word, 'tis very powerful and ſweet where it works, where it *proſpers*, and hath its proper effects: but as the Word profits not where *not mixed with Faith*, Heb. 4. 13. So 'tis with this Ordinance; Men's unbelief ſtrips it of its Bleſſing powers. Faith *draws* out the powers of this Ordinance, as the *living* Child draws the Milk out of the Breaſt, which a *dead* Child can never do. Faith makes the Soul to ſuck *Honey* out of that which is a *Rock* to others and as barren and inexorable. The Papiſts ſay indeed, that, Faith is not neceſſary to make the Sacrament effectual, but its effects are *ex opere operato*: if the external acts be performed, no matter how: but the Scripture ſpeaks another Language. As 'tis ſaid of the Man that *asks* without Faith, ſo it may be ſaid of the Man that *receives* without Faith: *Let not that man think he ſhall receive any thing of the Lord.*

CHAP. VI.

CHAP. VI.

Of the neceſſity of Repentance in a Communicant, that will Receive Worthily and Profitably.

IN this point, both Sacraments *viz.* of the Supper and Baptiſm have the ſame requiſites. Baptiſm is *inſignificant* to the *Adult* where *Repentance* preceeds not: ſo alſo in the *Supper*. *Judging* ourſelves is a ſpecial part of Repentance, and this the Apoſtle tells us (if practiſed) would prevent the diſpleaſure that takes hold on unworthy Communicants. *If we would judge ourſelves, we ſhould not be judged (i. e. puniſhed)* 1 Cor. 11. 31. *Draw nigh to God* (ſaith James) *and he will draw nigh to you*, Jam. 4. 8. But how ſhould we thus effectually draw nigh to God? it follows in the ninth verſe, *Cleanſe your hands ye Sinners, and purify your hearts ye double-minded:* (i. e.) Let there be a Reformation of Heart and Life, Thoughts and Actions, and the leaven of *hypocriſy* (which is to be underſtood by *double*-mindedneſs) purged out; and then your drawing nigh to God in any

of

of his Ordinances will meet with a Bleſſing. It is obſervable, that when *Hezekiah* was about to keep the Paſſeover, all the uncleanneſs found in the Houſe of the Lord was carried *forth*, and caſt into the brook-*Kedron*, 2 *Chron.* 29. 16. This muſt be our order in coming to the Sacrament; all Sin, which is *Spiritual* uncleanneſs muſt be caſt out of our *love* and *purpoſes*, by Faith and *ſincere* Repentance. *Levit.* 1. 9. 'tis ſaid of the Beaſt Sacrificed, that his *inwards* and his *Legs* muſt be waſhed in water. Theſe do fitly expreſs the *inward affections*, and outward actions; the diſpoſitions of the Soul, and the outward converſation. *Waſh thy Heart from wickedneſs O Jeruſalem, how long ſhall vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. 14. 4. In our daily walk we contract not only ſoil and filth on our diſpoſitions and thoughts; but alſo actual guilt. As Faith, ſo Repentance muſt cleanſe us from theſe, ere we can offer to the Lord a pure Offering, and have our Veſſels ſo cleanſed as God will fill them with Heavenly Treaſures. The *Phariſees* quarrelled with Chriſt, becauſe his Diſciples waſhed not their *Hands*, before they eat Bread: and all becauſe it anſwered not to the Traditions of the *Elders*. Commandments of Men are eaſily obeyed, for

for outward actions by an Hypocrite: but to what purpose? The great necessity and difficulty is washing *Heart and Life* from *Spiritual* impurity, and this is to be done especially when we are to eat the Spiritual Bread, that Bread of Life in this Ordinance. Take heed that herein ye transgress not the Commandments of the *Lord*.

Quest.

But what is that Repentance where-with a Man must come? or how should he repent before he come to the Lord's Supper? This is indeed a thing worthy to be enquired after, and herein many deceive themselves foully. Repentance consists in a *sorrow* for sin, and an actual *forsaking*: but many mock God and gull their own Souls. Their Consciences tell them, that their lives are so vile that there must be somewhat done before they come, and therefore there must be some sorrow or *shew* of sorrow at least, before their receiving, and therefore they will hang down their Heads like a bull-rush; not for a day or two, that is somewhat too long: but for an *hour* it may be or less, confessing their Sins to God, and demeaning themselves for the time with an artificial forced demureness: But *all* this, if this be all; is not worth a bulrush. Here is no abdication, no forsaking:

king: when the Ordinance and a little ſpace of time is over, they lick up their vomit, and are too often (as drunken Men having vomited) but made more freſh to fall to their Cups again. They deal with their Sins as *Abraham* ſaid to his Servants, *Abide you here — and I — will go yonder and Worſhip and come to you again*, Gen. 22. 5. This is like what is reported of the Serpent, going to drink at the Fountain, ſhe caſts out her poyſon: but ſo ſoon as ſhe hath drunk, ſhe takes it in again. *True* Repentance puts the Soul in the poſture of the *Iſraelites* eating the Paſſeover, they had their Shoes on their Feet, and Staff in their Hand: a readineſs and reſolution preſently to depart from *Egypt*, *never* to return more. True Repentance gives ſin, not a *temporary* ejectment; but an *eternal* divorce: and though it may ſue and *clamour* afterwards by its temptations, and ſometimes get ground; it never obtains its *former* marriage or eſpouſals.

Leaven, which ſignified the ſowre and corrupt humours of Heart and Life, was before the eating of the Paſſeover to paſs a *ſtrict* ſearch: Candles were to be lighted, that no Hole or *Corner* in the Houſe might ſe ure it from detection and *ejection*. Our Hearts have many *blind* holes, for the hiding

ing of sin: but *true* Repentance, and such as is meet for this preparation, is no-way partial, hath *no kindness* for its deceits. *Purge out therefore the old Leaven. Therefore let us keep the Feast, not with old Leaven &c.* 1 Cor. 5. 7, 8. If the Leaven be not purged out, no Lamb must be eaten in the Passeover: It no Repentance answerable to that *figure*, no Christ to be had in the Supper. It is said to consider the *ignorant* boldness, or *bold* ignorance of many habitual Swearers, Drunkards, and unclean Persons; who dare intrude themselves into this Communion, not being purged *so much* as from those filthinesses; much less from the love and reign of *all* sin whatever: and yet can like the Harlot, *Prov.* 30. 20. *Eat and wipe her mouth, and saith I have done no wickedness.* Let such seriously consider these following Particulars.

First, *He that comes without the preparation of Repentance, must go away without the blessing or comfort of the Ordinance.* There is abundance of joy and comfort to be had in this Feast by prepared Hearts. What are *civil* Feasts without *joy*? And what is the *joy* of civil to *Spiritual* Feasts? *A Feast is made for laughter, and Wine makes merry*, Eccl. 10. 19. It is often such a laughter at *civil* Feasts, as is *uncivil* and madness; and such

ſuch a mirth as is the ſong of *Fools*, breaking out as they break *out* of their wits: but the laughter and mirth of the Soul in this Ordinance, is Holy, Serious, Rational, Spiritual, Sublime and Subſtantial; promoted by ſobriety and ſerious impreſſions. But all this he is a ſtranger to who comes without Repentance, he intermedles not with *this* joy. This Feaſt is *A Feaſt of fat and ſweet things, a feaſt of Wine, a feaſt of fat things full of Marrow*: But if the veil of the hardneſs of heart be not taken away, there is no beholding the Glory, nor taſting the ſweetneſs of this Table: it will be but a *lean* Feaſt to them. The Heart thinned and emptied by Repentance, is the only Heart that ſhall be made fat here. *The poor ſhall eat and be ſatisfied*, Pſal. 22. 26. It is the humbled, penitent, returning prodigal; that will meet with the *fatted* Calf prepared, the Gold-Ring, the welcoming tears of *joy*, and kiſſes of *Love* from a *reconciled* Father. He that is *ſtill* a Prodigal, may take his meal with the Swine; and extract what joyes are to be had out of the trough ſwill and Husks. But ſuch foul and lean food will make no heart merry but thoſe of *Swine*.

And this is no wonder, that impenitents find no better entertainment, for God

invites them not: they come without bidding, & therefore are like to have no better cheer or welcome than they bring with them. *A ſtranger, a forreigner ſhall not eat thereof*, Exod. 12. Nor yet *a hired Servant, nor any uncircumciſed perſon.* Now all *the wicked* and impenitent *are eſtranged from the Womb*, Pſal. 54. 3. Servants of Sin uncircumciſed; therefore no Gueſts of God's bidding. *Ye ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed of heart*, Acts 7. 51. Every hard, unbroken, unmelted perſon is with God an uncircumciſed prophane perſon, with whom he will have nothing to do in his Holy and *peculiar* Ordinances.

Secondly, *An impenitent meets with a worſe thing than no bleſſing, even a breach and a blow:* and that in a double reſpect.

Firſt, ſuch ſhall not only be no what the better, but by far the worſe for his receiving in his Sins; *more* the Child of the Devil than before.

And Secondly, they become thereby more hardned in Sin, the ſnares of the Devil have faſter hold of them. Every Ordinance a Man paſſes through in an *impenitent* frame, contracts not only a farther *guilt*, but alſo a farther *hardneſs* on his Soul. And this is not only a hardneſs which is the *natural* effect of a cuſtomary impenitence

tence under Soul-melting Ordinances, but alſo a hardneſs of heart that is *judicial*. God is provoked thereby to give up men to the luſts they ſo adhere to, in *contempt* of his Holy Ordinances and Adminiſtrations. And this of the Lord's Supper ſo deſpiſed and abuſed, doth above *all* others provoke God to ſuch an expreſſion of his diſpleaſure and indignation. As they invert the order and due frame of their *hearts*; ſo God *inverts* his Seal and *impreſs*, from a farther ſealing of *aſſurance* on the Soul to the day of redemption, to a farther ſealing it to the day of *deſtruction*.

The effects of this Ordinance are herein like the waters of *jealouſie*, Numb. 5. 27. 28. Such as the Woman was for chaſtity or defilement, *ſuch* was its operation: if chaſte, ſhe became thereby the more healthful and fruitful; but if polluted, her Belly ſhould ſwell, her thigh rot, and ſhe ſhould be accurſed. That ſaying *Quicquid recipitur, recipitur ad modum recipientis* is true in this caſe: though the Ordinance be the *ſame* in it ſelf, it works according to the nature of the Receiver. The ſame Sun, yea the ſame beams of heat, ſoftens Wax, and hardens Clay, makes Flowers fragrant, and Dung-hils *ſtink*. *Seneca* hath a notable ſaying, very applicable to my preſent

purpose. *No bad man can benefit, because whatever good he possesses, 'tis corrupted by his ill use: even as a vitious Stomach turns the food that should nourish, into diseases and matter of grief,* Sen. *de benef.* Lib. 5. Cap. 12. 'Tis sad to have that which is ordained to life, to become a means of death: Our greatest blessings, to prove our greatest bane: and that which is intended to promote *sanctity*, and the sweetest consolations; to prove *rottenness* to the Bones, yea to the Soul: and render a man's Heart and State more wofully wretched; yet this is the case of an impenitent Receiver, or one who dare presume to this Sacred Ordinance in such a state. *The Soul that eats of the Flesh of the Peace-Offerings, that pertain to the Lord; having his uncleanness upon him: even that Soul shall be cut off from his People. Moreover the Soul that shall touch any unclean thing, &c.* Lev. 7. 20, 21. What should then become of those who wallow in *all* manner of the grossest impieties, and yet adventure to eat of this *Peace-Offering*? Surely though it be not the *unpardonable*, 'tis yet a very high *provoking* sin, such as much endangers the guilty to fall under the secret sentence of Eternal hardness, such as is in effect, an everlasting Excommunication, or cutting

off from the favour of God, and that Faith and Repentance which are *neceſſary* to its obtaining.

He that would receive Life (ſaith Auſt. Serm. de temp.) *let him change his life; for if he changeth not his life, he lives but in judgment: his life doth him more harm than good, it kills rather than quickens him.* If Men will be eating of this Feaſt, and will not be eſtranged from their luſts; 'tis like to fare no better with them, than with the *Iſraelites*, Pſal. 78. 30, 31. *Whilſt the meat was yet in their Mouths, the Wrath of God came upon them, and ſlew the fatteſt of them.* And although thou feeleſt no wrath for the preſent, yet it may be inflicted inſenſibly on thy Soul. A Man that brings every day a Faggot to the ſtack, may make a great pile though *inſenſibly*; 'tis ſo with ſuch as are frequent in theſe Provocations: and the greater the heap, the greater the flame when God ſhall put *fire* to it; either by *preſent* terrours, to awaken thee to life: or *future* condemnation, whereby death ſhall Eternally live. The Reaſons of this are ſpecially two.

Frſt, *Every impenitent Sinner defiles the Lord's Table.* An impenitent Sinner is ſo filthy a perſon, that he defiles all he *touches*. In the Ceremonial uncleanneſs, which is

but expreſſive of *moral* pollution; he tha
was defiled, defiled every bed he lay on
every ſeat he ſate on, and the very Sadl
he rode on; ſuch an one is *infectious*. *A*
Holy things do not Sanctify Dogs nor Pearl
nouriſh Swine: on the contrary, Dogs pollut
Holy things, and Swine deſtroy Pearls: an
wicked men have the ſame effect, Chryſ
Hom. 11. oper. imper. *He that defiles th*
Temple of the Lord, him ſhall God deſtroy
1 Cor. 3. 17. Put Table inſtead of Templ
& 'tis as true. Their Sin was great who ſai
The table of the Lord is polluted, Mat. 2. 12
What is their ſin then, who pollute it?
It is a horrible thing for a man's ow
Table to be polluted. *All tables are full o*
vomit and filthineſs, Iſa. 28. 8. How
much more to have the Lord' Table thu
defiled? But this pollution are all Me
guilty of, whoſe Sins are not waſhed awa
by the humblings, ſorrows, and Repen
tance of Faith, before they approach thi
Ordinance. *Incenſe from defiled hands i*
but a ſtink, and the preſumption deſerve
wrath inſtead of favour, Cypr. de Cæn
Dom. O that men would ſeriouſly con
ſider this! The report of *Ambroſe's* rebuk
to *Theodoſius* the Emperour is famous
When *Theod.* after he had at *Theſſalonica* cau
ſed a ſlaughter for a rebellion of the inno
cent

cent and the guilty together; he comes to the Supper as formerly without a profeſſed Repentance of that Inhumanity; but *Ambroſe* the Biſhop not fearing the Emperour, ſomuch as loving Faithfulneſs to Chriſt's Holy Ordinance, and the Safety of his and the Emperours Soul, thus rebuked him. *What? wilt thou reach forth theſe Hands of thine yet dropping with the Blood of unjuſt ſlaughter, & with them lay hold upon the moſt Holy Body of the Lord? or wilt thou offer to put that precious Blood to thy Mouth?* Upon this reproof the Emperour deſiſted, till he had reconciled himſelf to the Lord, and to his Church. Is it not enough for you, who live under the power of groſs Sins or any other, to defile your own Souls? Will you double your guilt by defiling theſe Sacred Myſteries alſo? The thoughts of this ſhould make ſuch Sinners fear and tremble.

Secondly, *A Man bringing the guilt of his Sins along with him to this Table* (which every impenitent Receiver doth) *he puts God in mind to do juſtice on him.* It was a Prayer for a great good, *Pſal.* 20. 3. *The Lord remember all thine offerings, and accept thy burnt Sacrifice.* It is not a leſs evil for God to be put in mind of our Sins, and rebellions. Impenitence will cauſe that

ſin to reach and abide on thine own Soul, which from a Holy Penitent is *transferred* to the Sacrifice. An Impenitent comes to the Lord's Table with that *Knife* in his hand, yea hug'd in his *boſom*; that ſtuck the Son of God at the very Heart. And will the ſight of this be an *Advocate* for thy *good? They Sacrifice Fleſh for the Sacrifices of mine Offerings, and eat it; but the Lord accepteth them not*, Hoſ. 8. 13. The next words give the reaſon. *Now will he remember their iniquity.* No marvel he accepts not their offerings, when he remembers their iniquity: and this remembrance doth alſo imply his being revenged on them by a *Poſitive* puniſhment, as well as the *Privation* of the Bleſſing.

When the Lord beholds a Man come in his wickedneſs to the Table, he doth as it were thus ſpeak concerning him; behold, here is the Man that was drunk, ſwore prophanely, was unclean, defrauded, was unmerciful to my poor; that is a proud perſon, a covetous worldling, a hater of the Godly, a common neglecter of Holy Duties, a careleſs Sinner: the man who thinks to mock me and mine appointments by a *diſſembled* Worſhip and acknowledgment, and to cover all his beloved

loved luſts, and ſecure himſelf from my diſpleaſure, by preſuming into my preſence, and laying *violent* hands on my Childrens Bread. How can I forbear him! Ah! I will be avenged on this Enemy! I will eaſe myſelf of this Adverſary! I will make him know that ſuch provocations ſhall be to the confuſion of his *own* face. If the Lord ſhould *thunder* out ſuch things as theſe in thine ears, would it not *awaken* thy ſleepy *ſecure* Soul? would it not ſtrike thee dead with *amazement?* O therefore hear *Moſes*, hear God by his Miniſters. Provoke not him to ſpeak in the power of his terrour, leſt you *Dye*. Put not this *New* Wine into *Old* Veſſels. Mourn for Sin before you come to this Feaſt, that it may be a Feaſt to you indeed, never to be turned into *mourning*.

CHAP. VII.

Of the neceſſity of Charity and Love in an orderly Communicant.

NOw follows the fourth thing required in Habitual Preparation, *viz. Charity*, and *Love* to our Brethren. This is a Truth confeſſed on all hands, yea many who make no great *conſcience* of Knowledge, Faith, or Repentance, will be concerned to end all *Controverſies* with their Brethren; that they may come to this Table in *charity*. But they who abide in other notorious ſins, may without *breach* of Charity be judged *unworthy*, for all their Charity.

This Grace of Love and Charity is required in performances of Worſhip. *I will that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. As doubting ſhuts out our Prayers for want of Faith, ſo Wrath for want of Love. In hearing the Word *profitably*, all *malice* muſt be laid aſide, 1 *Pet.* 2. 1, 2. Services not ſeaſoned with love, are very unſavoury to God. *Have Salt in your ſelves, and*

and be at peace one with another, Mar. 9. 50. This is the *Salt* of Services which must not be wanting. *Thou shalt not suffer the Salt of the Covenant of thy God to be lacking—with all thine Offerings thou shalt offer Salt*, Lev. 2. 13. Without Love we are unfit to hear or pray, but most unfit for the Lords Table; which is the Symbol and Profession of *Union* and *Communion* with God, and all his Saints in Heaven and Earth.

That is a known place, *Matth.* 5. 23, 24. *If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy Brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way: first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy Gift.* It may seem to be somewhat an odd and *incongruous* carriage, and to have some shew of *irreverence*; for a Man upon any *secret* & unknown occasion to *others*, all on a *sudden* to turn his back upon the Altar, and go his wayes: Yet however abrupt and *irreverent* it may seem to others, Jesus Christ will rather have Men admit of all *that*, than an uncharitable Communion, and an unacceptable Worship. *Certainly* (saith *Bern.*) *my Gift* (*whatever it be*) *shall not be accepted, unless* (*if I remember that my Brother hath perhaps wronged me*)

me) I reconcile him to me : how much less if I shall not first be reconciled my self? Bern. de præcept. & dispens. This being a preparative Duty, must be done ; and being necessary to the acceptance and benefit of the Duty, it were better the Duty were left undone, than that ; though the omission of *either* is bad enough.

Secondly, It will appear by the Contents of 1 Cor. 12. 13. *By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body ; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* The Apostle had shewed before, *ver.* 8, 9, 10. that though some Men do receive personal and peculiar Gifts, yet they are given by the Spirit, for the service of the *whole* Church: the reason is in short, because the *whole* Church is but *one body*, yea one Soul, or *one Spirit* ; expressing thereby the unexpressible intimacy, nearness, union of every Member to each other: and therefore there should be a *suitable* endearedness ; a love like what was the frame of the Church when the Gospel was first preached with the astonishing Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Acts 4.32. *And the multitude that believed were of one Soul.* They who believed the *same* Gospel-Truths, were not only united *intellectually* ; or at agreement in their *Opinions* ; but were also by mutual love, so in-

incorporated (but that is too low) or rather ſo *inanimated* together, as if one Soul and no more, had informed them all, directing their Underſtandings, Actions, and Senſations. And indeed both the Sacraments, according to this Text do aim at this holy and lovely Union of *Love*: Here are all the *three Witneſſes on Earth, the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood*, teſtifying and pleading for this communicative Love and Charity, from the moſt effectual ground of the moſt intimate Union. The *Water* of Baptiſm, the *Blood* of the Sacrament, and the *Spirit* making uſe of both, to that end of the Union of Love.

But what *meetneſs* for the very deſign of this Ordinance, where Spirits are ſo *embitter'd* againſt each other; that they not only are not *one*, but as far from Unity as *inimical* Contrariety? It will be a *Fray*, rather than a *Feaſt*, where the Gueſts (though not of *Kindred*) hate and ſmite each other; but much more monſtrous, to love them (like men in the Falling Sickneſs, deveſted of the uſe of Reaſon, and acted violently by their Diſeaſe) beating and tearing the parts of their *own* Body, by its *own* Members. This though a *terrible* reſemblance, falls ſhort of painting to the life the vitiouſneſs, and diſtemper

of

of uncharitableneſs among *Chriſtian* Brethren. The Love-Feaſts of the Primitive Churches were to this end of promoting love ſuitable to their name. We have left off their *Feaſts*, as without ground: and O that we had not caſhier'd their *love* alſo. *I hear that when you are come together there are diviſions among you*: was the charge of St. *Paul* againſt the *Corinthians*; and a *black one* it was, that they ſhould come together (I ſuppoſe to this Ordinance, as well as for others: for they ſeldom ſhut it out of their ſolemn publique Worſhip) & leave their *Love* behind them. It was a common ſaying of the Heathens concerning the Primitive Chriſtians, *See how they love one another.* But if they were to put their remark upon Profeſſed Chriſtians of of our dayes, it would be juſt contrary: *See how they hate one another.* Love is the cement of Communion; Union without it is but a Priſon, or as Priſoners in their unwilling Chains. Where Love is the Bond, 'tis no Bondage; 'tis a *ſpontaneous* ſervitude, full of freeneſs, ſweetneſs, and firmneſs: from which a holy Soul would think it ſome *diminution* of its felicity, to be at liberty to part.

Thirdly, as the Sacrament of Baptiſm is the Sacrament of our new Birth, ſo this is

is not only for the renewing that Covenant, but in order to our *nutrition* and growth in the Contents of the Covenant: (i. e.) In every grace and the exerciſe of it. Therefore to this Ordinance, we ſhould come with deſigns and expectations of a growth in that *new* Life: but without Love to Brethren this cannot be attained. The diſlocation of any joynt or part from the reſt of the Body, will neceſſarily forbid any *benefit* to it; or atleaſt ſomuch as may promote its *thriving* welfare. The Apoſtle renders the *encreaſing* of the Church *with the increaſe of God*, Col. 2. 19. to have its riſe from this *knitting*, and Union of each member in the whole; ſo as may be of *common* uſe. Now what are theſe joynts and bands? Surely ſome-what more than *external* polity and order: even Union of Soul which we have already ſpoken of; without which the Church is but a *lifeleſs* Form.

In the Church, the Body of Chriſt, there is, Firſt, many & ſundry Members. Secondly, they are all joyned and compacted together. Thirdly, Their conjunction is after the ſame manner *by one ſpirit, into one ſpirit*; ſo as that the ſpirits of Believers, do as it were *inſinuate* themſelves into each other. Fourthly, The firmneſs and abiding of this

this is by the bonds of Love and Peace. *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of Peace*, Ephes. 4. 3. *And* Col. 3. 14. Love is called *the bond of perfectneſs*. The Increaſe to this perfectneſs, is by the exerciſe of Love Mutually and Univerſally. Ephes. 4. 16. *Maketh increaſe of the body, unto the edifying of it ſelf in Love.*

Fourthly, where want of Love is, it croſſes that *pleaſure* and contentment, which is *ſuitable* to, and *one* end of this Spiritual Feaſt. When men ſit down at one Table with divided Hearts, it cuts off much of the good *cheer*; it takes away much of the reliſh of the beſt prepared Viands, that the Feaſt can be furniſhed withal. *Better is a dinner of green Herbs where love is, than a ſtalled Ox with hatred*, Prov. 15. 17. 'Tis a woful *contradiction* to this holy Feaſt, for Chriſtians inſtead of eating with one accord, and drinking into one ſpirit of Love and endearedneſs; to be devouring one another: for rending wrath, and conſuming malice to be preying; where Love ſhould be feeding delightfully on each others divine relation, and ſpiritual beauty. O that what ſhould be barred from our common boards, might find no entrance or welcome to this Sacred Feſtival. St. *Auſtin* would not endure

dure haters and *detractors* at his Table, and therefore had ingraven on it as a monitor in that caſe theſe verſes, *Poſſid. de vita* Aug. Chap. 22.

Quiſquis amat dictis abſentûm rodere famam,
Hanc Menſam indignam noverit eſſe ſibi.
Who loves to gnaw the fame of abſents here,
Him I account unworthy of my Chear.

And indeed though want of Charity among thoſe who ſit down together at the ſame numerical Ordinance, hath ſome ſpecial aggravations of guilt and diſpleaſure: yet to be void of it with reſpect to any Chriſtian however *remote*; is far from innocent, and a *diſturber* of its delights. For this Communion is no ſuch *narrow* thing, as to be reſtrained to the members *viſibly* preſent: but hath a latitude which takes in Chriſt the Head, and all his members whether in Heaven Triumphing, or travelling and fighting their way thither through any part of the Wilderneſs of this lower World: Not only in converſion with reſpect of relation, but in this Ordinance

nance, in the actual and raviſhing improve-
ment of that Relation; *We are come unto the Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jeruſalem,* —— *to the general Aſſembly of the Church of the firſt-Born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judg of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jeſus,* &c. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. Theſe raiſed and ſublime Conſiderations, the Apoſtle applyes as an *antidote* againſt want of Love and that unpeaceableneſs and bitterneſs that follows upon it. *Follow Peace,* verſe 14. *Looking diligently, leſt* —— *any Root of bitterneſs ſpringing up trouble you,* v. 15. Uncharitableneſs is bitter, yea a Root of bitterneſs; that puts ſowre *leaven* into the *Bread,* and bitter *Gall* and *Wormwood* into the *Wine* of this Feaſt.

To come to the Sacrament under the *power* of this diſtemper, doth no leſs null and make void theſe Ends of the Ordinance to us, than thoſe more viſible rudeneſſes of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 Cor. 11. v. 21. *This is not to eat the Lord's Supper.* Such a deportment is not like that of little Children, after whoſe ſimilitude we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God, *Luke* 18. 17. And the ſpecial quality of little Children, that qualifies for this, is a being void of

of malice. *Howbeit in malice be ye Children*, 1 Cor. 14.20. that is, be without malice. I know not why the Papists should engross Charity to themselves; or that because they seem to make it so much their peculiar, we should disdain its obligation: as if they had defiled that to us, on which God hath written the highest Character of Holiness.

Fifthly, *This Ordinance is a shewing forth the Lord's Death.* 1 Cor. 11. 26. *Ye do shew forth the Lord's Death.* Although one sense of shewing forth the Lord's Death by this Ordinance be the profession of a Crucified Jesus, acknowledged by us as the foundation of our hopes of Eternal Life, and that he is our Lord and Master: yet it also holds forth, and professes our resolution to live in *conformity* to his Death. This was the Apostle's Prayer, Phil. 3. 10. *That I might be made Conformable to his Death.* What was expressed in the Death of Christ by higher terms than his *Love*? His Love to those whom he purchased to be his *Brethren*, and was pleased to own them under that appellation, when they laid far greater temptations on him to *disclaim* and hate them, than ever any of us received from the most provoking, or despicable of our fellow-Members?

Whilst

Whilſt the Lord Jeſus Converſed with his Diſciples, before his Death as their Paſtor and Maſter alſo: what unbelief, Pride, contention, frowardneſs, and ignorance did he detect them of? And although he let them not eſcape without a Chiding, it never entred into his Heart to withdraw his *Love* or *Communion* from them. He calls them and carryes it towards them as his Brethren; and under that conſideration terribly menaces any that ſhould offend the leaſt of them. *Mat.* 25. 40. And when they all forſook him, and at ſuch a time when it moſt became them to be in a flame of Love and Gratitude; even when his Soul was groaning, and his Blood reaking hot that was ſhedding for their ſakes: He (conſidering their temptation, and weakneſs with compaſſion) is ſo far from rejecting and excommunicating them out of his Love, that he doth not ſomuch as caſt their faults in their teeth, when riſen from the Dead: but uſes in his firſt meſſage to them, the kind and charitable compellation of Brethren: *Go tell my Brethren, that I go before them into Galilee*, Mat. 28. 10.

Peter was of all the reſt, deepeſt in his declining and provoking his Lord; by not only departing from, but denying that ever he knew him: and that they might be

be convinced he was no Diſciple of the Holy Jeſus, polluted his mouth with curſing and ſwearing, the *black* mark of the vileſt of Men. Yet Chriſt who knew his ſincerity, rebuked him only with this heart-melting breaking queſtion, *Simon Peter, Son of* Jonas, *lovest thou me more than theſe?* as if he ſhould ſay, thou didſt before the tryal ſhew thy ſelf forwarder than thy fellows to ſtand by me, and madeſt thy boaſt as if thy Faith and Love were of better mettal than any of theirs: and though they ſhould all play the cowards, thou wouldſt abide the heat of the Battel, and be as a Standard-bearer among ten thouſand. But now the proof is made, haſt thou the ſame high opinion of thy ſelf above thy Brethren? This was the Love, Charity and Communion, Chriſt our Head and Lord had, and hath for us his Brethren; eſpecially when taking that Cup of bitterneſs, poyſon and Hell for our ſakes. He then knew as well as now, how unhandſomly and diſobligingly we would carry it towards him; what affronts, and how many we ſhould put upon him: yet he proceeds to Love, and Dye for us. And before hand to expreſs his charitable Communion, he not only ſits down with his Diſciples (then walking with him) at this

bleſſed

bleſſed Feaſt of Love, but he alſo transfers it to all the ſucceeding Generations of Believers: and with the ſame advantage of his perſonal (though inviſible) preſence and Communion with us.

From the Death of Chriſt out of his *pure* Love to us, the Apoſtle *John* (who knew what it was to love as well as moſt of the Sons of Men) infers, that we ought to lay down our lives for the Brethren, 1 *John* 3. 17. Hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us: and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren.

And from hence by an Argument a *majori*, concludes all Duties and Kindneſſes of a lower Claſs. Surely 'tis not ſomuch to *forgive* as to *dye*: to Love, as to ceaſe to *live* for their ſakes. Our Lord Jeſus, whoſe Death we ought (ſo far as capable and called) to *imitate*; he *dyed* that he might *Love*, and all bar in the way of Reconciliation might be removed: whereas our Charity calls for no ſuch *Coſt*, only the trouble of getting our Hearts into that poſture. Chriſt was God, and is ſo; yet forgives and holds Communion. O what dead Dogs are we, that we ſhould take it to be a dimunition of our honour, not to be revenged: or to paſs

paſs by offences from our equals (it may be our betters) as tolerable things.

All theſe things conſidered, and many more which a Soul touched with Divine Love may eaſily help it ſelf with; ſhould ſhame us out of an uncharitable temper towards our fellow-Chriſtians; and cloath us with a Holy Zeal, to baniſh for ever that diſhonour to the fellowſhip of the Saints, and greateſt diſturber of the Peace, out of the Temple, the Chriſtian Church.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Obedience in an orderly Communicant.

HAbitual Preparation takes in Habitual and Actual Obedience alſo. A Child in his rebellious & *ſtubborn* fits, is no meet Gueſt at this Table. He that will come in due order, muſt be ſuch a one who in ſome good (at leaſt ſincere) meaſure, *orders his Converſation aright.* 'Tis impoſſible for him to be an *orderly* Communicant, who is a *diſorderly* perſon; and regards not the Laws of the Lord of the Fami-

Families of Heaven and Earth, and Master of this Feast. For a Rebel Enemy, yea for a disobedient Child; God hath prepared his *Fetters*, not his *Feast*. He cares not to nourish foolish and hurtful *Lusts*, with the Dainties and Delights designed to put strength and courage into his peoples *Graces*. A Man in his disobedience approaching this Ordinance, puts a high affront upon God; an affront of no better a countenance than for a Rebel or Delinquent to rush into his Princes presence, presume to set himself down at his Table; when the Prince is Feasting with his *faithful* Subjects, and *dearest* Friends: and that with his Weapons of Rebellion *naked* in his *right-hand*, and without the least submission or atonement for Reconciliation. A disobedient soul is every way unworthy of the Lord. *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing*, Col 1. 10. Neither God can, nor his Saints ought, to have fellowship with disobedient persons. *And if any man obey not our Word by this Epistle, note that man; and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed*, 2 Thes. 3. 14.

Obedience is that which God regards above Sacrifices: without which a *Dog's head*, or Swine's blood is *acceptable* as the most

most *costly* and formal Solemnities. Isa. 66.3. *He that turns his ear away from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be an abomination*, Prov. 28. 9. This service with *such* a frame will meet with no better welcome. *Saul* sacrificed, but was rejected for want of *obedience*. 1 Sam. 15.22. *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice.* And it is so upon these five Grounds:

1. Obedience is more Spiritual.

2. More Universal; a part to be performed with the whole Man, at all times.

3. Wicked men might, and did offer Sacrifices: but Obedience is *peculiar* to the Saints.

4. Sacrifice was null and *void* as to profit without Obedience: but where there is Obedience, and in some cases no Sacrifice, Obedience will not lose its acceptation and reward.

5. Obedience *qualified* and fitted a man for Sacrifice: but Sacrifice doth not *qualifie* and fit a man for Obedience, where there was not *before* a Principle to that purpose. The same things may be said in the disparity of Sacraments to Obedience.

The necessity of Obedience as preparative to this Ordinance, may farther appear by these three things;

First, Christ will own no disobedient person as his *friend*. The friendship of the Master of the Feast is the *best Dish* at the Table. 'Tis storied of a favourite to a Prince, that he loved the Prince's *Countenance* better than his *Coin*: And of *Alexanders* bounty expressed to one with a Cup of *Gold*, to another with a *Kiss*; that he who received the Cup of Gold, said complainingly; Sir, the *Kiss* you gave your friend, was better Gold than my *Cup*. Christs friendly countenance will welcome only those whom he invites, and they are his friends. *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you*, Joh. 15. 14. To such it is that Christ will be so exceeding friendly, as to stir up their appetites, and encourage their liberty; with *Eat O friends, yea drink abundantly O beloved*, Cant 5. 1.

Secondly, None but obedient persons shall have *Communion* with Christ. With such Christ will sup, and they shall sup with him, *Rev.* 3. 20. But Christ will by denying this *Communion* to disobedient persons, send them away *supperless* from this Supper. *He that hath my Commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me, shall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him, and I will*

I will manifeſt my ſelf to him, Mat. 14. 21. 'Tis to ſuch, and only ſuch, that Chriſt will open his heart, and give them a view of that rich and ſoul-bleſſing love that lives there. And indeed without this Communion and manifeſtation of Chriſt's love, the Bread will be unſavoury, and the Wine without Spirit and Life. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth, for his love is better than wine*, Cant. 1. 2. was a holy and wiſe choice of the ſpouſe, in her ſpiritual extaſies and raptures. The wine that comes from a Friend's Lips, or in the Cup which he hath kiſſed as a token of Love, adds not a little to its reliſh. Chriſt's manifeſtations of his Love to the Soul, is the chief expectation of a well-ſtudied Communicant: But this is not to be expected, where we kiſs not the Son with the kiſs of *a real homage*, ſervice and obedience; from whence the truth of that ſaying of *Auſt.* roundly follows, *What is there more wild and unreaſonable, than to hold Communion in the Sacraments of the Lord; and to have no Communion with his Commands*, de Bapt. Cont. Donat.

Thirdly, Where there is no Obedience, it utterly denyes *any grace* to be there. A diſobedient perſon, brings to the Lord's Table neither Faith nor Repentance, nor

Love, nor Humility; nor any other Vertue. What a naked thing and unlovely is ſuch an one? How unarmed to reſiſt temptations, wherewith Satan is moſt buſie when the Soul is running for the *greateſt prize*? How unfurniſhed for the work of that *beſt* of *hours* on this ſide Heaven? What poor earnings is Chriſt or ſuch a miſerable wretch like to make of this intercourſe? Obedience is *fruit meet for repentance*; that is, ſuch as will evidence Repentance to be ſincere and true. Where Obedience is not, there can be no Faith. It was ſomewhat a Sarcaſtical challenge of St. *James*, *Shew me thy Faith without thy Works*. As if he ſhould have ſaid, Let me ſee you do that which is impoſſible. The like is true of Love. Faith worketh by Love, even as the members and parts of the Body do their Offices active, by that heat natural and vital which is from the heart imparted to them. As where there is no *Love*, no work is done worth the name of Good or Gracious; ſo where *no work* is done, no true ſincere Obedience, there can be *no Love*. Love hath its Seat and *Throne* in the heart; what poſſeſſes that, moves all the other faculties of Soul and Body ſuitably to its inclination. As the helm of a ſhip which way ſoever that

that is turned, the ſtrength of Sails filled with violent Winds, and oars managed with the ſtrongeſt Arms, will move the Veſſel but according to its Influence and direction. Theſe things conſidered; it is beyond doubt, that an obedient heart and life is as neceſſary a Preparation for this Holy Communion, as are the Duties and Bleſſings of it.

CHAP. IX.

Of ſolemn Sequeſtring, and ſetting a Man's ſelf apart before receiving the Sacrament.

HAving already ſpoken of *Habitual* Preparation, we ſhall now treat of that which is *Actual*: for although a Man have all the parts of Habitual Preparation beforenamed, he muſt not there take up his *reſt*. Actual Preparation is requiſite to a good and profitable Communicant, though Habitual may denominate a good *Chriſtian*. The five wiſe Virgins *Mat.* 25.4. took Oyl in their Veſſels with their Lamps, and had their Lamps burning: but they alſo Trim'd their Lamps, when they went forth to *meet* the Bridegroom; that they might addreſs

themſelves with the greateſt circumſpection and ſolemnity, and their lamps might burn with a more than ordinary brightneſs and clearneſs. A Muſician that hath skill to play on his Inſtrument, will yet tune it, and rub his fingers (if nummed and chill) ere he uſe it, that he may do his part with more accuracy and agility. And indeed however a perſon may be habitually prepared, if thoſe Graces are not ſtirred up and quickned to their proper and *occaſional* exerciſe, he will make but *dull* and uncomfortable work, and as poor earnings.

Actual preparation conſiſts in theſe five things; of which we ſhall ſpeak in their order. 1. *In Examination.* 2. *In renewing and quickning of Grace.* 3. *In ſtirring up in ourſelves ſtrong deſires after Chriſt.* 4. *In expectation of the benefits of the Sacrament.* 5. *In ſeeking God by prayer in a ſpecial manner.*

Firſt, Of ſolemn ſequeſtration, which is an *avocation* from all common employments, to a *ſerious* ſolitude; that nothing may intermedle with ſo much as our *thoughts*, but what may have a tendency to put our Souls into a *due* poſture, for the exerciſe and improvement of the Ordinance. All other things muſt for a time become *alien to us*, and muſt be dealt with

as *Abraham* with his Servants, when he went to Sacrifice *Isaac* at Mount *Moriah*, *Gen.* 22. 4, 5. *When he saw the place afar off, he said unto them; abide you here with the Ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and Worship, and then return to you again.* Thus we should set aside all *secular* business and cogitations, and not suffer them to go with us unto this *Mount Moriah*; no, nor so much as into our Closets: Pretences of consequence, and clamorous importunities should meet with a *deaf-ear*, and a *bolted* heart: and however often repeated, should have no other answer than *Nehem.* gave to those *ensnaring* and plotting companions. Neh. 6. 4. *I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down to you, Wherefore should the work cease?* Christ admonishes his Disciples, *Mat.* 6. 6. to shut the door to them, when they addressed to private Prayer. This was to difference them from Hypocrites, who lost all their ends of their Religion without spectators. But there is another convenience of such a retirement, *scil.* to bar out addresses about earthly affairs: yet if the heart keep open-house to impertinent and distracting thoughts, the most secret closet will no more secure us from their intrusions, than

if our persons were on the Exchange or the open High-way.

We find among other things which made a man unfit to eat the Passeover, *being in a journey afar off* was one. *Numb.* 9. 13. But why was *such* a man unfit? except from the great difficulty of keeping out the *thoughts* of his business, which being of so great a moment as to call him far from his habitation and relations; would in all probability call off his thoughts from that solemn Ordinance also: or at least so distract him in its performance, as would make great abatements in its acceptance with God, and benefit to himself.

It is no easy matter for us to shake off our earthly concerns; they are such familiars and so *nigh of kin* to our earthly hearts. 'Tis a harder work than to strip our selves of our work-day apparel, and put on holy-day attire. Were not sense, custom, and corruption become Tyrants, and hard Task-makers to us; we might pass from *digging* in the Garden to *solemn Communion* with God; and from any *civil* to the highest *spiritual* and Religious imployments; as easily as we can pass our Bodies out of one room into another; but as the case stands 'tis far otherwise. The

Buy-

Buyers and Sellers that throng the Temple of our Souls, muſt be chid, whipt and bolted out; or this Temple will not be left void of theſe intruders: no, not againſt this time of Worſhip, of all others the moſt ſerious. He that can do this without time ſpent to the beſt advantage before hand, is in a much better condition, and hath the things and thoughts of the world more at command, than the moſt of his Brethren.

When this is done, another task of time is yet to do; our hearts are not only to be *ſwept*, but they muſt be alſo *garniſhed*. Grace is not like the weeds of nature, that will hardly be kept under, but if but left to their own liberty will grow and ſpring a-main: Grace muſt be awakened and quickned by ſpiritual good *husbandry*; and Prayer muſt call to Heaven for waterings, for gales; *Awake O north-wind, come thou ſouth, blow upon my Garden that the ſpices thereof may flow forth*, Cant. 4. 16. But 'tis a pittiful thing when inſtead of theſe *fragances* in meditations and diſcourſes, Men's hearts and tongues ſhall be filled with market-chat, even to the Church-doors. O this is rank unſavoury, for men to come to the Lord's Table reeking hot off the World! To cool to theſe lower

things, and excite a heavenly heat, will ask time improved in the most devoted retirement.

Another ground for this retirement and Sequestration in order to a prepared frame is, That all the powers of our Souls are to be called in, and United for this great work: *That we may attend upon the Lord without distraction*, 1 Cor. 7. 35. And this is to be understood, not only of a freedom from molestation, but also that entireness of Soul, by which the full and whole stream of faculties and affections may serve to this holy imployment. God loves a broken heart, but he hates a divided heart in Religious Duties: especially in this, wherein we come to tender to God our Stipulation of the Covenant, all of which is but a heart to be *his*: we had need then have it as large a heart, as all our strength and treasures can make it. *My Soul praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me bless his Holy Name*; was David's and should be our practice, *Psal.* 103. 1. And when he had gotten the several powers of his Soul fixed to this end, he then resolves to begin the work. Psal. 57. 7, 8. *My heart is fixed O God, I will sing, and give praise: awake up my glory, awake Psaltery and Harp*, &c. The Sacrament is an *Eucharisti-*

cal

cal thing; a Feaſt, a Song of Loves: wherein the Soul is to ſtrain its utmoſt in bleſſing God, and the Redeemer, for that Cup and Bread of Bleſſing. To tole in the *whole* Congregation of our faculties and affections, to do their parts in this Work; we muſt be a little before hand, with the time of its performance.

I would not be impoſing of certain *ſpaces* of time, for every one to take up in withdrawings for Preparation: for that would be to preſcribe the ſame Rule for different *Conſtitutions* of Souls, and *Conditions* of Life: ſome may not (as the very poor, whoſe Families would feel the want of an hours labour in their bellies) others *need* not (as ſuch whoſe Employments and (to be hoped) hearts alſo are ordinarily upon Spiritual and Divine things) ſpend ſo much time as others; whoſe buſineſs about the World may be *enough alienating* their hearts from *Soul*-concerns, and yet may afford time enough to call them *home*, againſt ſuch a Feſtival; and to ſet the Heart in a more than ordinary order. Much might be ſaid alſo of Conſtitutions of body. That which is but *neceſſary* time to *compoſe* ſome, would be more than enough to *confound* others. And alſo according to degrees of

Grace

Grace habitual, time is required. Some there are whose Souls are maintained in such a *constant decorum*; that as persons that use alwayes to go *neat*, are ready at a call to appear to *any* company: so they are ready to any Duty, and can say (through the Grace of God) that their Hearts are seldom in a worse than a fixed frame. A little time will serve such, when Babes in Grace, and more careless walkers will have more to do. But of all others they have cause of long Sequestrings and Retirements, whose falls into *gross* and scandalous sins have not only exceedingly polluted their Garments; but also *broken* their very Bones: such are not *soon* gotten into order, no not so far as a *well setled* disposition to receive the Lord Christ, and *actually* with the whole Heart to embrace the Covenant. Gross sins are *great* falls, whose recovery is the work *almost* of another conversion. *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren*, Luke 22.32. Holy *David* found the pollutions of the sin of uncleanness to cleave to his disposition long after, and thereby the order and *intireness* of his Soul for God and Holiness, much disturbed and distracted: which appears by that prayer, Psal.51. *Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit*

rit within me. When formed Agues or Feavers are departed, and their ſtrength is put into the heighth of former Diſtempers quenched; yet they leave behind ſuch *grudgings* and languiſhings, which *time* as well as *means* muſt wear off. Whiles theſe Relicks remain, the body is very unfit for great Employments, or to enjoy the delights within the reach of a healthful *conſtitution.* 'Tis no otherwiſe with a Soul *lapſed* into *dangerous* and *deeply* defiling ſins; it will coſt ſome more than ordinary time, in the moſt devoted holy Endeavours, to render it meet for an acceptable and comfortable addreſs, to the duties and delights of a Sacramental exerciſe. I conclude, that Retirement is neceſſary to *all*, the ſpace of time every one may beſt chooſe for himſelf; none being more capable of diſcerning the temper of a man's own Soul than himſelf: at leaſt if he be an obſerver of his *inward* frame, which muſt needs be the practice of all upright hearts; and with others this Chapter hath nothing to do.

CHAP. X.

CHAP. X.

Of Examination.

THe Heart thus withdrawn, and bent to the work of Preparation; its next part is ſelf-Examination. *Let a man Examine himſelf*, 1 Cor. 11. 28. This though a duty at other times, yet 'tis tranſcendently a duty in order to ſo tranſcendent an employment. And as the duty is of great moment, and our ſlothful proud and ſelf-opinionated hearts very withdrawing from it; ſo it concerns us the more to eſpouſe and be *thorow* in it. We muſt neceſſarily underſtand wherein lies our diſorder, deadneſs, crookedneſs, defilement; before we can apply our ſelves to their *due* remedies. If we find none or few diſorders after an *impartial* ſearch, the comfort of ſuch a reſult, will pay us for our pains and time with a better thing than *Repentance*.

This Ordinance being an *Encloſure*, and not a Common; an adventure without a right, is but a breaking the Lord's hedge, and will render a man a *Treſpaſſer*: beſides the

the ſpoils ſuch an one commits on this Sacred Paſture, and his own Soul; for which God who is owner of both, will require an account. And indeed beſide the ſtanding right, every true Chriſtian hath to this Ordinance; this duty of ſelf Examination ſeems neceſſary to the uſing of that right: as he who hath a right to the food on his Table, hath yet (in a ſtrict ſence) no right to fall to, till a bleſſing be craved and acknowledgment made to God as our Benefactor. And 'tis obſervable, that the Apoſtle exhorts, yea binds conditionally thoſe to examine themſelves who were already as Saints a formed *particular* Church; and he reſtrains not the duty to the weaker or looſer ſort, but puts all upon it indifferently. The uſe and neceſſity of ſelf-Examination will appear more fully by the following particulars.

First, *A man's confidence that he is doing what is his duty, depends on ſelf-Examination.* To have this Faith and Aſſurance, is not only neceſſary to make an action good to *us*, which in it ſelf is our duty; but alſo diſcharges us of thoſe fears, diſtractions, and ſelf-condemnings, which will otherwiſe greatly diſturb and weaken us in the duty. *Whatſoever is not of Faith is Sin*, Rom. 14. 23. The Apoſtle affirms as

as an indiſputable truth, *i. e.* for a man to do this or that action which he *doubts* of the lawfulneſs of, however lawful it be otherwiſe for him to do, yet his *doubting* makes it a ſin to him. And upon this the Apoſtle grounds another aſſertion, *and he that doubteth is damned if he eat.* Κατακέκριται *condemned*, his Conſcience will cenſure him as a ſinner therein. So that ſelf-Examination, being neceſſary to our being *groundedly* perſwaded that our attending on God in this Ordinance is not our ſin but our duty; carries a ſtrong perſwaſive in it to its *ſerious* uſe. And although it may be ſaid that upon our Examination *once*, and finding our fitneſs; we may be excuſed repeating it again upon every occaſion of receiving: yet let it be firſt conſidered, that there is requiſite as well a preſent fitneſs, as an *inherent* right: and ſecondly, that a renewed evidence of Grace, and an often putting our hearts into the *beſt* poſture, will be no *ſmall* advantage and comfort in our Chriſtian courſe.

Secondly, *Our more comfortable and profitable Communion depends much upon the Actual knowledg of our fitneſs.* It is true, that a *hearty* willingneſs to take what Chriſt tenders in the Sacrament, is a *real* fitneſs, *i. e.* to accept of a Crucified Lord and

and Saviour, and thereby to profeſs and bind our ſelves to the terms on which he is *tendred*. One receiving after this manner, doth it not without an ineſtimable advantage; though he underſtand not this to be ſaving Faith, nor dares to call it by that name: at leaſt fears it would be too much preſumption for him to conclude, that he is in Covenant with God.

But when a man is ſatisfied not only that he is willing to receive Chriſt upon his *own* terms; but alſo that he hath received him, is in Union to him, beholds the inſcription of Chriſt ſtamped on his heart and life, by which 'tis apparent that he belongs to Chriſt, and Chriſt to him: Who can tell the abundant entrance of ſuch a Soul into the Pleaſures, Treaſures and Glories of this Ordinance? Whereas that life and love written in the wounds of a bleeding Jeſus, is but one entire Epiſtle, or rather conveyance of bleſſings to his Soul ſeen and read as in Capital letters. While others take Chriſt with a trembling hand, fearing to be called *dog* for ſo doing: ſuch an one can boldly ſay *My Lord and my God. And we have known and believed the Love that God hath to us*, 1 John 4. 16. This is the effect of a man's being fully and rightly perſwaded in his own mind of his own Intereſt:

tereſt: and the means of this is ſelf-Examination. *Examine your ſelves* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *whether ye be in the Faith, prove your ſelves, &c.* 1 Cor. 13. 5. Πειράζετε, δοκιμάζετε; *try, pierce, and prove by experiences* The Apoſtle ſeems to chide in the latter part of the verſe, ſuch as had not ſome knowledg of Chriſt's being in them (though not ſo ſharply as our tranſlation renders it) *Know ye not that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be* ἀδόκιμοί (not reprobates in the common acceptation, but without *proof* or unapproved? The word being oppoſed to δόκιμοι by a privative particle: and it is juſt as if he had ſaid, *Know ye not that Jeſus Chriſt is in you; except you have not examined your ſelves by a cloſe ſearch and tryal, as the Gold-ſmith tryes his Gold by the touch-ſtone, or the fire; and upon this trial found your ſelves approved.*

Thirdly, *It is much better to examine our ſelves before we come, than to be examined by God when we are there, or afterwards.* And God will examine them to purpoſe one time or other, who will not examine themſelves: and it may be as *Paul* was commanded to be examined *viz. by ſcourging*, Acts 22. 24. Every interrogatory God puts to ſuch a Soul, may be with a ſtripe as ſmarting as a Scorpion. It will be

be little comfort to a negligent wretch to be accoſted by the Maſter of the Feaſt, with a *Friend how cam'ſt thou in hither?* What doeſt thou here? Such words will fetch blood, not only into the Cheeks by bluſhing for ſhame; but from the Heart by piercing wounds made by the Sword of Chriſt's Mouth. *If we would judg ourſelves we ſhould not be judged*, 1 Cor. 11. 31. Certainly *David* would never have been ſo bold, as to call on God in theſe words, Pſal. 139. 23, 24. *Search me O God, and know mine heart, try me &c.* if he had not firſt ſearched and tryed himſelf. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?* Job 13. 9. But *Let every man prove his own work, ſo ſhall he have rejoycing in himſelf*, Gal. 6. 4.

CHAP. XI.

Of the Examination of Faith.

THe things about which we are chiefly to examine our ſelves are theſe three *viz. The Truth, the growth and the want of Grace.* I ſhall begin with the Examination

on of faith. Counterfeit Gold may ſhew fair, and ſometimes have more probable appearances of truth at firſt view than that which is true Gold; eſpecially when the falſe ſhall have all its advantages to plead its truth, and the true be pale and ſullied: but the touch-ſtone, or the fire will diſcover the truth of the one, and the cheat of the other.

Examine your ſelves (ſaith the Apoſtle) *whether ye be in the Faith?* Which is all one with Examine your ſelves, whether the Faith be in you? The *Corinthians* were very buſie in examining St. *Paul*, and his Miniſtry: But, ſaith he, *ſeeing ye ſeek a proof of Chriſt in me*, do not neglect ſeeking a proof Chriſt in your ſelves. 'Tis eaſy and common with the Hypocrite, to be ſearching and cenſuring others: but 'tis a good probability of ſincerity, when men are moſt concerned in the ſearch of themſelves. It is a high ground of ſuſpicion that a man's coin is counterfeit, when he diſtaſts the tryal, as a man doth a cauſe he knows or fears is ſtark naught. And although ſome things loſe by tryal, eſpecially by a fiery one; yet Faith is a gainer not only of a good report, but alſo of a ſubſtantial increaſe! *The tryal of your Faith, which is much more precious than*

than Gold; may be found unto praiſe &c. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Not only the Faith tryed, but its tryal alſo is precious: and Faith the more valued, by being tryed-Faith.

And who can tell but this Faith may come to a fiery tryal? *Bilney* tryed his finger in the Candle, before he adventured his whole body to the fire. When the fiery tryal comes, how many mens Faith which hath ſeemed before more pretious than Gold, hath proved more vile than Droſs. He that dares not examine himſelf upon his Bed, will be hard put to it when he is brought to the Bar. And ſurely our Faith is but a low-priz'd thing with us, if of all other things we pretend to be owners of; that alone ſhall be thought unworthy of tryal: as if it were no loſs or diſappointment, for that to be found falſe, corrupt, and uſeleſs. Theſe things I have premiſed, to urge the practical obſervation of the Rules of the Examination of Faith. True Faith muſt be known by its Fruits and Effects. The Grapes, Pomgranates, and figgs which the Spies brought out of the Land of *Canaan*, were evidence enough that it was a good Land. The Fruits by which Faith may be examined, are three. 1. *Such as reſpect God.* 2. *Our ſelves.* 3. *Our Brethren.*

With

on of faith. Counterfeit Gold may shew fa

NOTE

This volume
tight binding ar
effort has been
duce the centre
result in

and of a substantial increase! *The tryal of your Faith, which is much more precious than*

than Gold; may be found unto praise &c.

me has a very
and while every
en made to repro-
tres, force would
in damage

tryal of
precious
than

elves. 3. Our Brethren.

With

on of faith. Counterfeit Gold may ſhew fair, and ſometimes have more probable appearances of truth at firſt view than that which is true Gold; eſpecially when the falſe ſhall have all its advantages to plead its truth, and the true be pale and ſullied: but the touch-ſtone, or the fire will diſcover the truth of the one, and the cheat of the other.

Examine your ſelves (ſaith the Apoſtle) *whether ye be in the Faith?* Which is all one with Examine your ſelves, whether the Faith be in you? The *Corinthians* were very buſie in examining St. *Paul*, and his Miniſtry: But, ſaith he, *ſeeing ye ſeek a proof of Chriſt in me*, do not neglect ſeeking a proof Chriſt in your ſelves. 'Tis eaſy and common with the Hypocrite, to be ſearching and cenſuring others: but 'tis a good probability of ſincerity, when men are moſt concerned in the ſearch of themſelves. It is a high ground of ſuſpicion that a man's coin is counterfeit, when he diſtaſts the tryal, as a man doth a cauſe he knows or fears is ſtark naught. And although ſome things loſe by tryal, eſpecially by a fiery one; yet Faith is a gainer not only of a good report, but alſo of a ſubſtantial increaſe! *The tryal of your Faith, which is much more precious than*

than Gold; *may be found unto praiſe &c.* 1 Pet. 1. 7. Not only the Faith tryed, but its tryal alſo is precious: and Faith the more valued, by being tryed-Faith.

And who can tell but this Faith may come to a fiery tryal? *Bilney* tryed his finger in the Candle, before he adventured his whole body to the fire. When the fiery tryal comes, how many mens Faith which hath ſeemed before more pretious than Gold, hath proved more vile than Droſs. He that dares not examine himſelf upon his Bed, will be hard put to it when he is brought to the Bar. And ſurely our Faith is but a low-priz'd thing with us, if of all other things we pretend to be owners of; that alone ſhall be thought unworthy of tryal: as if it were no loſs or diſappointment, for that to be found falſe, corrupt, and uſeleſs. Theſe things I have premiſed, to urge the practical obſervation of the Rules of the Examination of Faith. True Faith muſt be known by its Fruits and Effects. The Grapes, Pomgranates and figgs which the Spies brought out of the Land of *Canaan*, were evidence enough that it was a good Land. The Fruits by which Faith may be examined, are three. 1. *Such as reſpect God.* 2. *Our ſelves.* 3. *Our Brethren.*

With

With respect to God, the fruits of Faith are, 1. *Fruitfulness in all good works, in obedience to God.* True Faith is no Loyterer. *Faith which works*, Gal. 5. 6. *Your work of Faith*, 1 Thes. 1. 3. *The work of Faith with power*, 2 Thes. 1. 11. It makes a man powerful to yield obedience. Hence 'tis called the Obedience of Faith; because true Obedience, Obedience purely from the heart can no man perform, but by the power of Faith. *Unbelieving and Disobedient* persons are joyned together, *Tit.* 1. 15, 16. One of the hardest acts of Obedience is to forgive an offending Brother, which when our Saviour pressed on his disciples; they reply with a prayer, *Lord increase our Faith*, Luke 17. 5. Increase of Faith they knew would make such hard work of Obedience to be easy. We must be *Abraham's* Children, before we can do the works of *Abraham*; not his Children by natural generation, but by believing. *They which are of Faith are the Children of Abraham*, Gal. 3. 7. So many works of sincere & pure Obedience as thou canst shew, so many witnesses of thy Faith thou producest.

Secondly, *True Faith believes and depends upon God in all things, and at all times.* It so believes every word of Promise, as with

with an eye on the good promiſed to adventure all in an upright following the Lord. It ſo believes the purity of his Doctrine, as in a compoſed frame, and when free from the violence of temptation; to chooſe thoſe truths as the muſt pure and lovely rules of Faith and Life. It ſo believes the threatnings, that it fears to adventure on them, more than on the greateſt evils in the World: and is more joyful and thankful for deliverance from them, than from all that man could do unto them. Yea whatever be the face of God's Providences towards them, frowning and looking ſeverely; yet they will not be beat out of good thoughts of God, like thoſe of *Aſaphs*, Pſal. 73. 1. *Truly God is good to Iſrael, to them that are of a clean heart.* With this he prefaces all thoſe expreſſions of the diſtemper of his Soul, bred and breaking out from his carnal conſideration of the great proſperity of the moſt wretchedly wicked, and the daily bread of ſorrow which he had from the hand of God; while with all his might he walked with God, in the wayes of Holineſs and purity. It is not *Job*'s peculiar, but the temper common to all the faithful, *Though he kill me yet will I truſt in him*, Job 13. 15. They dare venture their all in this, on the hopes

hopes of God's dealing truly with them, and performing his Promiſes to them in the other World.

Thirdly, *A holy boldneſs and reſolution of acceſs to the Throne of Grace.* Although the evidence of great faithfulneſs, and a ſetled aſſurance of the Love of God in Chriſt; is neceſſary to ſuch a holy boldneſs of acceſs, as ſhuts out all fears and doubts: yet where there is the leaſt true faith it will not be an utter ſtranger to the Throne of Grace. Fear, from the belief of God's threatnings, and love, and hope, from the belief of Covenant-promiſes, will caſt ſuch a Soul at the foot of God: and though its preſent doubtful & terrible apprehenſions of the anger of God, and the ſence and force of its own corruptions be ſuch, as may be called the belly of Hell; yet they cannot keep the Soul in which a ſpark of true Faith lives, from looking again and again to God's holy Temple. *Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight, yet will I look again towards thy holy temple*, Jon. 2. 4. Never doth there reſt in ſuch a Soul that deſperation, as utterly diſcourages and quenches a ſpirit of prayer. None is born a believer and abides dumb. And as this is the moſt proper evidence of the truth of Faith, ſo our confidence of acceptance,

reverend

reverend familiarity with God, and frequent addreſſes are the evidences of the ſtrength of our Faith.

Fourthly, *A deſire of Chriſt's appearance, and his ſecond coming.* We walk here by Faith, and not by ſight: yet where true Faith is, it longs to be turned into ſight. But here we muſt be ſomewhat cautious, leſt we ſhut out true and ſaving Faith, while our eyes are fixed on the Evidences of rather a ſtrong Faith, and Faith of aſſurance. Therefore in ſhort, where the leaſt true ſaving Faith is, it would not loſe its hopes to be accompliſhed at Chriſt's coming for all the world: yet its doubtings and diſtruſt of its own ſincerity, may mix ſome fear and trembling in its expectation; and the efficacy of pure nature (by which the Soul and Body have ſo long made up one perſonal *compoſitum*) may put a *remora* to thoſe haſting affections to the day of Chriſt, which Faith fills the Sails of with a ſtrong gale. But when the Soul is attained to a Faith of aſſurance, and ſome clear Viſions of God, Chriſt, and the Life to come; its ordinary ejaculations are, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*, Rev. 22. And the very Object to which their Souls haſten, is *the coming of the day of God*: and the ſolemnizing of thoſe Glorious and Eternal

Nuptials, in order to which they have been ever since their first Conversion espoused.

For the Fruits and Effects of Faith with respect of our selves, take these four:

First, *An effectual working of the Word upon our hearts.* Faith makes Gods Ordinances effectual. *Which effectually worketh in you that believe*, 1 Thes. 2. 13. The Word works indeed on the hearts of them who believe not; but 'tis mostly to a rage and rebellion against its truth and strictness: or to a hardning and benumming the conscience, becoming thereby *a savour of death unto death.* But the Gospel *is the power of God to every one that believes*, for prevalency with them to answer its holy Commands, and gracious tenders and proposals. Such fall under its authority with a willing mind. The grace of Faith is in the Soul, doing the same as natural life heat and strength in the Body: by which both its food and physick have their good and due effects. Every true Believer hath a heart of flesh to the word, but of stone and steel to sinful temptations: its Conversion consists in changing its aspects to God and sin, to a direct contrary. The Devil and his fallacies work effectually, while Children of disobedience; but when Believers,

Believers, it turns the efficacy to God's Authority in his Word; to which the ſoul deſires as perfect a conformity, as the wax impreſſed hath to the ſeal.

Secondly, *Sanctification of Heart and Life.* The Apoſtle diſcharges thoſe Converts, *Acts* 15. 9. from the prophane Gentiliſm imputed by the converted *Jews* upon this ground: *God having purified their hearts by Faith.* Faith where-ever it is, devotes the Soul to God, enters it into the trade of Godlineſs or *Godlikeneſs*, that it may in all things pleaſe him. And though the Faith exerciſed here, will not go with the Saints to Glory; yet it prepares by purification Chriſt's ſpouſe for his everlaſting embraces. As the Faith of miracles fetched healing vertue from Chriſt to heal bodies; ſo the grace of Faith to heal Souls of their ſinful pollutions; which are their diſeaſes, deformities, impotencies, and all that is not in them what it ſhould be.

Thirdly, *A ſtrife with, and victory over Sin, Satan, Corruptions, and Temptations.* We muſt not ſuppoſe this to be meant of all theſe at all times: for then we ſhould ſo far offend againſt the Generation of God's Children, as not to leave one in this World under that name: but yet the whole life is a war-fare with theſe adver-

ſaries. And every Believer not only overcomes groſs temptations ordinarily, but alſo is ſo far from under the powes of ſin; that he never layes down his Weapons and becomes reconciled to it. So long as the leaſt degree of the Graces of the Spirit dwells in the Soul, it will be luſting againſt the fleſh; though it cannot prevail as it would, *Gal.* 5. 17. Though *Eſau* and *Jacob* are in one womb, there will be ſtruggling and contending. And although the enemies of the ſoul are alwayes up in Arms contending, and ſometimes prevailing; yet Faith not only keeps the field, but ordinarily is the victor. *This is the victory which overcometh the World even our Faith*, 1 John 5. 4.

Fourthly, *True Faith grows.* Where Chriſtians are faithful to their means, and induſtrious, it increaſes to a greater ſtrength and fruitfulneſs: but where it is weakeſt yet it grows. As we ſay of a Tree or branch, though not ſo fruitful and green as before; yet if it put forth but ſome ſprigs and fruit it grows, it is not dead. This is to be underſtood of the growth of all true Grace, elſe the notion may prove a ſnare: but where we grow not to a greater degree of ſtrength and fruitfulneſs, 'tis our ſin ſhame and loſs; though it con-

condemn us not as utterly void of Faith.

Now follows briefly the tryal of Faith by its fruits respecting our brethren; the 1. is *Mercy, Love, Compassion, and Beneficence.* I bundle them together, for they cannot be separated. As Faith works by Love, so it works Love: and where the affection of Love is, Mercy, Compassion, and doing-Good can be no more wanting to our Brethren the objects of Love, than to our selves. Love is an uniting Grace, embodies persons tied by its bonds: yea (as we said long before) makes them one Soul: by which Union there is such a sympathy and fellow-feeling, as moves us to them as to our own members. There is not in Scripture any Character of Faith more frequently and pathetically expressed than this of Love to the Brethren; and where 'tis wanting, Men may talk like Angels, without a conviction of true Faith; if the Scripture-record is to be believed.

Secondly, *A desire and endeavouring to bring others into the Faith.* A person having once tasted that the Lord is Gracious, and found the sweetness and goodness that is in Christ and his wayes, cannot, will not be so cruelly silent and omissive; as to suffer others within reach to perish in their

folly, without ſome motives to their recovery. Faith is a communicative Grace, and as it is ſo Naturally; ſo it is ſo Obediently and Prudentially. A Chriſtian knows he becomes no more poor by making others rich in Faith, than a mans Fire or Candle gives the leſs heat or light by kindling others. Beſides, exerciſe of Grace increaſes it, and where it brings in an increaſe of Souls to Chriſt's Kingdom, all the good thoſe Converts ſhall ever be, do, or enjoy, will make ſome addition to the reward of ſuch who were the Lord's Miniſters of Converſion to them. O that this character of Faith were to be found more apparently on its profeſſors, inſtead of thoſe ſpots of Earthlineſs, Contention, Diviſions, & Zeal for eſpouſed ſingular opinions; which are the great ſtumbling blocks in the way of Sinners Converſion. Surely Faith in the primitive Chriſtians was of another kind than that of this Age, or at leaſt more genuine. When the Woman of *Samaria* had found a Saviour, ſhe forgets her pitcher for haſte, and ſetting aſide the thing we call Civility; ſhe runs from Chriſt to the City to bring as many as ſhe could to be Bleſſed with the ſight ſhe had ſeen, and the words ſhe had heard, *John* 4. The Church when ſcattered by Perſecution, were

were more concerned to gather-in Souls to Christ, than for their exile and loss of all they had in the World, *Acts* 11: 19. Certainly this is none of the least of those things that accompany that Faith which accompanies Salvation. And if thou canst be very solicitous, that thy Servants do their work, and thy Childrens portions increase, and all thy Family have a good aspect towards thy Earthly Prosperity, and yet regard not what becomes of their Souls: 'tis a black mark on thine own, that it gives little credit to God.

CHAP. XII.

Of the examination of Repentance.

HOw true Repentance may be discerned, is evident in *John* Baptist's Exhortation, *Mat.* 3. 8. *Bring forth fruit therefore meet for repentance*, *i. e.* such as become and evidence Repentance. And such fruits are these which follow.

First, *Shame for sin.* True Repentance hath ever shame for its companion. A real Penitent is not ashamed of its *Re-*

pentance of Sin; but of the *Sin* it repents of. *I was ashamed, yea even confounded*, Jer. 31.19. *Then shalt thou remember thy wayes, and be ashamed*, Ezek. 16.61. The Heathens had an Opinion of *blushing* to be the colour of Vertue. Sure I am, that a *Spiritual* blushing is the colour of Repentance, where there is the shame of the heart, though the *blood* rise not into the face.

There is a *double* shame, First, The shame of the taken *Thief*, *Jer.* 26.26. A shame which arises from the disgrace of the *discovery*. 2. There is the shame of a *Child*. And this is such as arises, not so much from the disgrace of sin before *Men*, as from the filthiness of sin in its *own* nature, and before *God*. It is a character of a *seared* Conscience not to be ashamed in the *first* sence: but the *second* only evidences a sincere Penitent. For men to be of the temper of those, Jer. 6. 15. *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush.* I say this discovers them far gone in sin and hardness of heart. Yet as not being ashamed *at all*, is the part of one of Sins first-born: so no shame but what arises from the sence of a God abused, and a Soul polluted, is

the

the evidence of a true Penitent, though but a *beginner* in Grace.

Secondly, *A deep ſorrow and hearty grief for ſin.* Wherein are two things to be conſidered; the *object* of ſorrow, and its *greatneſs*. For the firſt, the object of Sorrow is *Sin*. It is the conſideration of Sin *as ſuch*, that eſpecially afflicts. This is that which pricks at heart. *Father I have ſinned*, Luke 15. 21. He was in a depth of *miſery*; but of all *that* he is totally ſilent: as Sin was the burthen that preſſed his Soul, all his expreſſions were of ſins grief. So it was with *David*, Pſal. 51. 3,4. *My ſin is ever before me.* A true Penitent is more grieved for the *guilt* of ſin, than for the *fear* of Hell. *Agur* implies ſin to be to him more fearful than ſuffering, when he begs *not* to be poor, *not* for the evil of *poverty*, ſo much as its *temptation* to the evil of *ſin*. Prov. 30. 9. *Leſt I be poor and ſteal, and take the Name of God in vain.* When *David* was threatned with ſore puniſhments for his ſin; yet as grieved chiefly for ſin, he prayes, 2 Sam. 24. 10. *I beſeech thee take away the iniquity of thy ſervant.* How different was his frame from that of impenitent *Pharaoh's*, Exod. 8. 8. *Intreat the Lord that he may take away the Frogs from me.* The plague of the Frogs

grieved him, but his ſin was no ſore at all.

Repentance (where genuine) is ſo much concerned in ſorrow for ſins ſake, that where God by *expreſs* pardon hath taken away the puniſhment; and added thereto high expreſſions of *love*: yet it cannot ſo far pardon its own ſin, or it *ſelf* rather having ſinned; as then to forget it, or forbear pointing at it as its ſore and grief.

David, after God had pardoned his *ſin*, cryed out of his ſin; which notwithſtanding was ever before him. And the Prodigal after his Father had ſhewed him ſo much kindneſs as to meet, embrace, and kiſs him, doth not forget to ſorrow for, and confeſs his ſins, although it ſeemed rather a time for thankfulneſs; *that* did not prevent him bringing forth this Fruit meet for Repentance. A penitent heart will remember the ſin that God forgets. So that 'tis plain and clear as Sun-beams, that true ſorrow for ſin hath ſin chiefly for his object. *Pharaoh* may cry out, *I have ſinned*, and *Judas* too, yet no true Repentance the cauſe, but the pain and puniſhment. *He that fears Hell only, fears not to ſin, but to burn; he hates not ſin, but hell.* Aug. ep. 144. But ſuch ſorrow hath

not

not the comfort of the *Evidence* of true Repentance. Deal honestly now with thy self, what is it grieves thee; *sin*, or *smart*? or which bears the greater share in the *cause* of thy pain; It is no *hard* matter to resolve this question, and 'tis as *easie* to understand the make of thy Repentance.

Secondly, *The depth and greatness of sorrow.* The sorrow of Repentance is not a *sleight* and superficial thing; 'tis a sorrow that reacheth the Heart and Soul. *Thus was my heart grieved, and I was pricked in my reins*, Psal. 73.21. Or as it may be read, *thus was my heart* leavened. Sin *soured* at his very heart, and thereby diffused its *distaste* throughout the whole man. *Peter* upon his Repentance, *went out and wept bitterly.* The tears of Repentance are tears of *bitterness*. *Peter's* sorrow was so passionate, as was not meet for the view of the standers-by. Although God *forbade baldness* for the dead, as too great an expression of sorrow for any loss in the World; yet he commands it for sin, as not excessive for so great a cause. That man's sorrow for sin will be most bitter, to whom sin is most bitter: and sin is *most* bitter to every truly penitent Soul. *Hold me O Lord* (saith David) *for my bones are vexed*, Psal.

6.2.

6. 2. It is such a sorrow as is to the Soul like bones out of joynt to the Body: no rest, no delight; the whole man full of grief and distraction till the Lord speak peace and healing by reconciled favour, and an overcoming power against the sins we sorrow for.

Thirdly, *A forsaking and rejecting all our former lusts, and sinful wayes.* That Repentance only is true which God *accepts* and hath *promised* Mercy to; and that is only a *forsaking* Repentance. *He that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy*, Prov. 28. 13. This was the frame of *Job's* Repentance, *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more*, Job 34. 32. It is most apparent hypocrisie to pretend Repentance of that which we have not a firm resolution to *cast off* and reject. *He is not a penitent* (saith Bern.) *but a mocker, who pretending Repentance fears not to make more work for Repentance.* Bern. *de modo vivendi.* Sin finds no grace in the sight of a real penitent; such an one deals by sin as *Nehemiah* with *Tobiah* and his Furniture, *Nehem.* 13. 7, 8. He turns him out of his Chamber he had taken up in the Temple, and throws out *all* his stuff after him. And as *Achan* was dealt with. *Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day,*

and

and all Iſrael *ſtoned him with ſtones*, Joſh. 7. 25. Its wrath againſt ſin is not only ſuch as the Sun goes down upon, but the whole life, yea Eternity is affected with it. 'Tis a Repentance and diſpleaſure, *never*, *never* repented of. Baptiſm is called the Baptiſm of Repentance; now as Baptiſm is waſhing the Body from carnal Pollutions, ſo Repentance is a waſhing the Soul from *moral* or Spiritual Defilements; and that not only by pardon and remiſſion, but alſo by perſonal Sanctification or Separation. Ephraim *ſhall ſay*, *what have I to do any more with Idols*? True Repentance is *mortal* to ſin, as 'tis a *recovery* to the Soul: but if a man could weep his eyes out, and yet ſin abide in the affections, and in its reigning power; it were to little purpoſe.

Fourthly, *A walking in Holineſs and Obedience.* Bringing forth fruits meet for, or *evidencing* of Repentance, is to be fruitful in *holineſs*. Repentance is not only an emptying thing, but it fills up its room with the fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt to the praiſe of God. It doth not leave the Soul a meer *deſart*. As it *plucks* up with the one hand, it *plants* with the other. *Reckon ye your ſelves dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God.* There is a change made from the unfruitful works of

of darkneſs, to thoſe which are truly fruitful. The *old* man is Crucified, and the *new* man is put on. The natural faculties have changed their Maſter, and become Servants of Righteouſneſs unto Holineſs. The whole man being grafted into a new ſtock, brings forth fruit that hath another reliſh, than that of *wild* depraved nature.

CHAP. XIII.

The Examination of Love.

LOve hath its *Counterfeits* as well as other Graces. *Let Love* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *be without diſſimulation.* Ἀνυπόκριτος *without hypocriſie*, Rom. 12. 9. *Unto unfeigned love of the Brethren*, 1 Pet. 1. 22. *My little Children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.* 1 Joh. 3. 18. Love, which lies all in the *Tongue*, is hypocritical Love. *Nepthaly gave goodly words*: but that being *all*, was not any character of his *goodneſs*. Theſe following *appearances* of love to the Brethren, may be all but the Counterfeits of Love.

First,

First, A man may hold an *outward* correſpondency with them: But converſe and peace is *ſhort* of Love. 2. He may prefer and honour them, yet not love them. And this may ariſe not only from *politick* ends, but alſo from a reſpect to ſome Gifts of *Nature*, or other endowments ſhort of Grace. So *Pharaoh honoured Joſeph*, *Nebuchadnezzar Daniel*, and *Laban Jacob*. 3. He may alſo reverence them. *Herod* reverenced *John*, *feared* him. Grace and Piety have a Majeſty in them, which commands reſpect even from its haters. The people *magnified* the Believers, *Act.* 51. 13. who yet loved not them ſo well as to be of their number. 4. He may do them many kind offices, yet not love them with a ſincere and holy love. *Jeroboam* could invite a Prophet to dinner, and the very *Barbarians* ſhew courteſie to St. *Paul*. 5. He may deſire to dye *their death*. This was *Balaam's* caſe. *Let me dye the death of the Righteous, and let my latter end be like his*. 6. He may honour their *memory* when dead, and and gone. So did the *Phariſees*. Mat. 23. *They garniſhed the Sepulchers of the Righteous*: But for all this, were not *righteous*: and ſo far from loving the righteous for their *righteouſneſs*, that they thought them

beſt

beſt when *fartheſt* off. And as I have proved, that any *one* of theſe things may be where impiety dwells; ſo it is true that they may dwell *all together* in one perſon, where there is not *one ſpark* of holy love to God's *holy* ones. Thus much may ſerve for the Negative part of Tryal: Let us now conſider ſome Marks which evidence ſuch on whom they are to be found, lovers of the brethren, with a Love not only *unfeigned*; but alſo a Love that deſerves the *name* of Grace.

Firſt, *A man who loves the brethren with a gracious love, loves them for their Graces ſake.* God's *Image* on them *commands* their affections. Holineſs is ſuch a Loadſtone, as wherever 'tis diſcerned, it draws ſuch a mans Love. 'Tis one thing for a Man to love a Child of God, another to love him *as* a Child of God. Then Love is true, when 'tis *pure*: and then 'tis pure, when Grace in the object is its pure and *only* motive; or at leaſt, if there were no *other* conſideration but that to draw Love it would be forcible.

Secondly, *Where true love to the brethren is, it will exceed love to any others.* Such an one will love none like them. Chriſtian Love beſtows a double portion of it ſelf on Chriſt's *Benjamins*, the ſons of *his*

right

right hand. There is no Parts, Vertue, or any other thing truly beautiful; but a Child of God ought to love *whatsoever things are lovely*. But as 'tis a Duty, so 'tis the frame of a good soul to love most where is most beauty: and that is where *Grace* is, which is *Godliness*. And although it bear no *proportion*, yet it carries in it some *similitude* to the Divine Being. Holy *David* was so far *enamoured* with the Saints, that his Love to others seemed altogether stifled by it; or at least below his *notice* in the *hour* wherein he considered his Love to them. *To the Excellent in whom is all my delight*, Psal. 16. 3.

Thirdly, *Such an one loves all the Saints.* As no other qualification but Grace can draw that kind and strength of Love, so the meanness of person, parts, estate; yea the many deformities of sinful infirmities, shall not withdraw their Love from them. I fear yet, there are many good Souls who love not all God's people, yea it may be *hate* instead of love them: But this doth no way invalidate this mark; for were there not something (that with them at least) casts a veil over their Saintship, and rendred them under some other worse character, they could not but love them. O

that

that there were no need of *this* Charity! and that the Devil that *make-bate* among the Saints, might no more *ſo far* beguile any upright hearts; as to make them believe that many of God's dear Children are but Baſtards, and unworthy of that worthy name; becauſe they fall not under ſome *by-notion*, which they have too hotly affected, and put too much of Chriſtanity in.

Fourthly, True Love delights in the ſociety of the Saints. *Love the Brother-hood* is their practice. The genuine ſence of the phraſe is, Love the Saints in fellowſhip, in that united Goſpel-polity and order; wherein they are made capable of the moſt pleaſant and profitable Communion. It was a ſore menace Zech. 11. 14. *I will break the Brotherhood between* Judah *and* Iſrael. Their natural Relation could not be broken, (no more is it in the choice of God's Children who ſhall be their *Brethren*, for *of his own will begat he us*) But their mutual Love and Fellowſhip may be broken: but it is upon miſunderſtandings. *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts*, Pſal. 119. 63. The *Hypocriſy* of many men's Love is made apparent by their taking more delight in the company of vain perſons, than of the Righteous:

ous: as if that Scripture were false, *The Righteous is more excellent than his neighbour.* Where the serious Godliness of a person works a weariness and nauseousness, how can such a one say he loves them, while his heart is not with (but somuch against) them? If there be any Heaven to a Child of God on Earth: 'tis in Communion with God in his Church and among the Saints.

Fifthly, True Love is not easily angred, *Charity suffers long — is not easily provoked,* 1 Cor. 13. It will bear much ere it will break. It is like God, who being Love *is slow to anger.* He is not easily provoked, yet is easily reconciled. The Apostle when he had exhorted to the hard works of *forbearing and forgiving one another,* Col. 3. 13. in the next verse directs to the sure means: *And above all things put on Charity, which is the bond of perfectness.* A peevish and implacable Spirit is the highest *contradiction* to a Holy Love.

Question.

If a man wrong me, am I bound to forgive him; though he acknowledg not his offence, nor seeks Reconciliation? And must I forbear the Sacrament, if (he omitting those Duties) I have not forgiven him?

Ans.

Answer.

First, A man is bound so far to forgive, as to retain no wrath or malice against the person offending, though he ask not forgiveness: And if a man do not forgive so far, he is not fit for the Holy Communion.

2. Although we ought so far to forgive, yet we are not bound to express this forgiveness to him, unless he signify repentance and desire it, *Luke* 17. 14.

3. If the offence be matter of loss in thy goods, or otherwise repairable; thou art not bound to forgive or remit that kind of satisfaction, farther than it is given thee: But if the offence be such as savours of enmity, thou art not bound to take an obstinate and unreconciled enemy into thy bosom or society, *Mat.* 5. 23, 24. The bar is against the *delinquent* party. *If thy Brother hath ought against thee*, not, if *thou* have ought against thy Brother. And indeed if the offences and unreconcileableness of another, may put a bar betwixt me and the priviledges of the Gospel; it were in the power of an hypocritical and malicious Professor, to make those blessings of none effect to whom and when his lusts prompt him: but this is not to be admitted. Therefore if thou do thy Duty towards another,

another, thou mayest cheerfully sit down at the Lord's Table, making no scruple for conscience sake, in this matter.

CHAP. XIV.

The Examination of Obedience.

THe last thing whose Truth I proposed to be Examined is *Obedience*. And whether we consider its *habit*, or *particular* Acts; there is not any thing pleaded as a Character of *sincerity* of Grace, found guilty of more deceit and hypocrisie. When *Samuel* had pinched *Saul* with so close a conviction, as was in the bleating of the sheep and lowing of the oxen in his Ears; yet *Saul* stands to it, and persists in his not only asserting, but also glorying in his Obedience. *I have performed the Commandment of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 15. 13. *I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me*, verse 20. But *Saul's* Obedience was in *Samuel's*, or rather the Lord's sight, the highest rank of Disobedience, no less than *rebellion* and *stubbornness*. There was not an Ox

or

or Sheep, whose lowing or bleating did not proclaim him a rebel to the King of Heaven.

True Obedience may be known by its *grounds*, *ends*, and *properties*, all of which we shall consider in order, and first its Grounds.

The First Ground I shall name is, *the Will and Authority of God*. Sincere Obedience hath its law in God's *Soveraignty*. What-ever hath its command, is therefore in the Conscience of an Obedient Soul a law not to be Objected against; much less Superseded by all the *cavils* of the thing call'd *reasoning*. *I am the Lord*, is that which puts power in his Precepts, and meets with *I am thy Servant* for its Echo. There is not a sincerely Obedient Soul, but is herein of *David's* temper. *Thou hast Commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently. O that my wayes were directed to keep thy statutes*! Psal. 119. 4, 5. As true Faith hath the word of Promise for its foundation, so true Obedience the word of God's Command. And therefore the Apostle 1 *Thess.* 4. 3. gives this as an irrefragable tye to their Obedience, *For this is the Will of God even your Sanctification*. And indeed no Obedience can be called Divine, but what hath an eye to a *Divine* Authority as its *motive*. &c.

Second Ground of Obedience which is Sincere, is *Sincere Faith.* That is true Gospel-Obedience which flowes from the Faith of the Gospel: a Receiving Christ Jesus the Lord, a taking hold of the Gospel-Covenant. The Apostle makes this its distinguishing title, Rom. 16. 26. *The Obedience of Faith.* The Obedience of a man who rejects Christ, is but *reprobate* Obedience. As no Obedience that is genuine can be brought forth but by our Union to Christ as our *root*; so none will be accepted of God which doth not relliſh of that Divine Root. Gold it self however gliſtering had no holineſs in it, but what it received from the Altar.

Third Ground is *the Love of God in Christ.* Though ſincere and genuine Obedience muſt be ſpontaneous, and *voluntary*; yet the conſtraints of God's Love to us, and our Love to God in Christ, is not only no *contradiction* to it, but alſo eſſential to its Being. Herein conſiſts the filialneſs of ſincere Obedience, that it is not *ſlaviſh* nor *mercenary.* Love ſupplyes the room of bonds. 'Tis that which layes on it the obligation of neceſſity, and is wages alſo to it ſelf. *Son go to work to day in my Vineyard,* was enough to the penitent: though no wages was propounded, *Mat.* 21. 28

21. 28. *The Love of Christ constraineth us*, 2 Cor. 5. 14. *Be ye followers of God as dear Children*, Ephes. 5. 1. Some men yield Obedience meerly for the love of self-credit, and other such like low and *carnal* respects; or at most for fear of wrath. These are Obedient *slaves*. But if all these considerations were laid aside, sincere Obedience would live on the single provision of Love.

Secondly, Sincere Obedience hath for its Ends the Glory of God, *Conformity* to him, and *Eternal* Happiness in the enjoyment of *him*. It sets the Crown on the Head of Christ, and desires no greater reward than what God hath annexed to such a frame and dep rtment. It knows that in aiming at God's Glory, it shall not miss the mark of its own Happiness; and therefore directs its Obedience to that End, with a delightful security and satisfaction, that the results and consequences will be all that can be wished by a Soul made meet to be a partaker *of the Inheritance of the Saints in light*. It rejoyces in hope of the Glory of God; both in respect of that which redounds from the *creature* to him, & from him to the creature. *I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy Commandments*, Psal. 119. 166. *I will behold thy Face in righteousness; I*

shall

ſhall be ſatisfied when I awake with thy likeneſs, Pſal. 17. 15. *For to me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain*, Phil. 1. 21. Theſe Scriptures abundantly expreſs the Holy aims of a holy Obedience, joyning thoſe things together which God hath joyned; and will never permit to be ſeparated.

Thirdly, The Properties of ſincere Obedience are, 1. *Univerſal* in reſpect of the *Subject*. The whole man is ſubjected to God, Body, Soul, and Spirit. And herein conſiſts its Integrity, which always accompanies Sincerity. 2. In reſpect of the *Object*, its Heart and Soul is bent to obey all God's Commands. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to all thy Commandments*, Pſal. 119. 6. לא אבוש I ſhall not bluſh, or be put to ſhame. Some derive our Engliſh word *abaſhed* from this *Hebrew*, *Boſh*. Integrity and uprightneſs, as it preſerves from falling into a damnable, ſo alſo from falling into a damned ſtate. Such a frame will ſtand, and not be confounded in the Judgment. And the Pſalmiſt tells us that an *Univerſal* reſpect to God's Commands, renders a Man upright in the ſight of God. 3. In reſpect of time, 'tis Obedience at all times. *Will the* [*Hypocrite*] *delight himſelf in the Almighty?*

mighty? Will he alwayes call upon God? Job 27. 10. The Obedience that is Sincere is not a fit, but the constant temper and *Crasis* of the Soul. The whole life is a walking with God. Its diversions from Obedience are its *Errata*, but its Obedience is the Volume of the Book, from the title-page to the end. *Temporising* Obedience will never prove a Man *sincere*, nor reach the Eternal rewards. To leave off to be wise, and do good upon *politick*, is to deny that ever we began to be wise, or to do good on Sincere Grounds. Princely *David* may speak for all the rest of the Sincere Servants of Christ in Psal. 119. 12. *I have inclined my heart to perform thy Statutes alwayes, unto the end.*

Secondly, its Property is to be *ready to Obey*. But this must be understood of its more ordinary frame. *Jacob* deferred to build an Altar, and *Jonah* fled as far as he could from God, and a duty he deemed dangerous, and disgraceful. Such leaden-heel'd, and unwilling Obedience, God's sincere Servants (in the main) may sometimes render. But ordinarily their Obedience is expressed in the language of *David*, Psal. 119. 60. *I made haste and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.*

Thirdly, It is *free and unconstrained.* Thy

Thy People shall be a willing people in the day of thy power. It is not grudgingly, or of necessity: but from the heart and choice. *His Commandments are not grievous* 1 John 5. 3. It rejoyces and sings in the wayes of the Lord: as such do who are where and what they most desire. What are chains to others, are Ornaments to them. What is a Prison to others, is Liberty to them. Sin and withdrawings from God Suffocate their delights: but they live when they stand fast in the Lord.

CHAP. XV.

The growth, and wants of Grace Examined.

AS there is grace in Truth, in opposition to meer Pretences, and Appearances; so there is Grace in its *degrees* and *growth*. As in Heaven, so on Earth; the Members of Christ (though all living and true Members) differ from one another in Glory, as Stars of a greater and lesser magnitude and lustre. We read of no less than *seven* stages of Growth, by which the Saints are distinguished on this side that Glory, they shall attain unto when transplanted

planted out of this Wilderneſs into the Paradiſe of the other World.

1. Their being *formed* Chriſtians, which is by Chriſt's being *formed* in them, Gal. 4. 19.

2. Their *Birth*, John 3. 6. *So is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

3. Their *Infancy*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new-born babes.* 1 Cor. 3. 1. *Babes in Chriſt.*

4. Their ſtate of *Child-hood. When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child*, 1 Cor. 13. 11.

5. Their *well-grown Age. I write unto you young-Men, becauſe ye are ſtrong, &c.* 1 John 2. 13.

6. Their *full-grown Age. Men in Chriſt*, Epheſ. 4. 13, 14.

7. Their *old Age. I write unto you Fathers*, 1 John 2. 13.

All theſe are the ſeveral gradations of the new-Creature, yet are not denominated from the time of their ſtanding, but the *degree* of their proficiency. Many who are born Saints, may ſee to their ſhame, ſuch who were in Chriſt *long after* them, to be in the luſtre and degrees of Grace by many degrees *before* them: yea become young-Men for *ſtrength*, and Fathers for *ſagacity* in the things of God; while they (like Loyte-

Loyterers) tarry as far behind as almoſt where they began their race; and as *like* Babes in Chriſt ſtill, as very much ignorance and ſpiritual weakneſs can make them. And although a Right unto, and real fitneſs for the Lord's Supper, is not to be denied to the leaſt of all Saints; yet as it concerns all true Believers not to make work for ſhame and Repentance (backwardneſs in grace being our ſin) nor to loſe the fulneſs of the ſweet and ſtrength of this Feaſt of fat things: ſo far it concerns them both to grow, & alſo to know their growth in Grace. And indeed where there is not a growth in Grace under the enjoyment of ſuch means, the fulneſs of the Lord's Table will reproach them of diſorderly and diſtempered Souls, more than their leanneſs can charge a dry inſipid and vertueleſs quality on that *mighty* Proviſion.

Firſt then, Spiritual Growth is accordingly accompanied with Spiritual *ſtrength*. *As is the Man, ſo is his Might*. A well-grown Chriſtian is a *ſteady* Walker with God in a ſtorm, and againſt a crowd of oppoſers: he is not carried away with every wind of Doctrine, nor flinches at every fiery tryal. *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is but ſmall*, Prov. 24. 10. Obſerve thy activity in duty,

and thy eaſe and delight therein: and alſo with what ſucceſs thou grappleſt with temptation, and the concluſion will be eaſie, how far thy Grace is *grown*. And this is a much better courſe than making thy gueſs by the diſtinctneſs or ſublimity of thy notions of Divine things; all which the Devil may *out-do* thee in, and thy Soul may be much more puffed and ſwell'd with pride under their conſiderations; than edified or built in Grace, which is the health and ſubſtance of Chriſtianity.

Secondly, it may be judged by thy *Spiritual Appetite*, (I call it a Spiritual Appetite becauſe there may be a very *hot* Appetite to ſome Spiritual things, which yet is but Carnal; yea a dog-Appetite, from a vitious heat, and conſuming quality in the Soul.) Thus 'tis with many hard Students, and Sermon-devourers, who are enamoured with Elegancy of ſtile, and ſpeculations only of the matter; either to pleaſe the fancy of themſelves, or exchange for proviſions for the Fleſh, take it in what ſence you will.

Of the former of theſe the School-men were not of leaſt remarque, whoſe vitious hunger fell chiefly on the very bones of Divinity, to the deluding, choaking and ſtarving the Souls of many, if not their own.

But

But to my purpose, Growth of Grace will increase hunger, and form a better Appetite: an Appetite to the more *solid* food, and to a more profitable digestion. The sweetness and strength such an one finds by Ordinances, renews the desire of their enjoyments: yea maintains a *habitual* thirst of them. It were well if many professors were not so far from this mark of Growth in Grace, as almost, if not altogether a neglect of their Spiritual Food. The new-*birth* of such is rather to be questioned than their *growth*. *My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God!*

Thirdly, Growth in Grace is ordinarily visible to others, yea more than to our selves. Its heat and life is most within, while its light and brightness is most visible without us. It is mostly to our selves like the Seed which grows up we know not how, while to others 'tis matter of apparent observation. The voice, the visage are the manifest tokens of Growth. *A man's Wisdom maketh his face to shine*, Eccl. 8. 1. Every one who believes is a new Creature, this is the essential change; yet Growth makes such a change from Child-hood, as leaves scarcely the person within knowledg. The Complexion and Countenance

of a Grown Christian for Divine beauty, a healthful and vigorous aspect, will evidence it self. *When I was a Child, I spake as a Child, &c.* 1 Cor. 13. 11. But when a Man he put away Childish things: his behaviour in countenance, word, and deed expressed a greater Spiritual gravity. And certainly, as a carnal light deportment in word, and deed, proves a person but a *babe* in Grace: so the contexture of a Heavenly and well-ordered discourse and conversation is no mean evidence of a Growth in Grace.

I shall now descend to give some brief Testimonies of the increase of Faith. A *grown* Faith is *comparatively* great, in respect of the common size of Christians, and the first size of our own. *O Woman! great is thy Faith,* Mat. 15, I have not found *so great Faith no not in Israel.* It performs great Obedience: bears with patience and cheerfulness great sufferings: is rich in good works: carries the Soul as on Eagles Wings to live in Heaven, and to have its *feet* on the neck of those things which others set their *hearts* on: gains great victories over *strong* lusts and temptations: believes a promise against a current of seemingly *contradicting* Providences: loves an angry God, will neither depart from, nor think

think hardly of him; though he hide his Face, yea though he frown, chide, and ſmite.

For the Examination of our wants, 'tis neceſſary (when we addreſs to the Lord's Table) that we may direct our ſpecial Faith and deſires for a ſuitable ſupply. We ſhould herein imitate thoſe who are going to the market, who carry their forethoughts with them of what is wanting in the Family. The Lord's Supper is a great Market, yea a great Mart; where all that we can want or wiſh is to be had for our Souls, and 'tis pitty that ignorance of our needs ſhould ſend us thence without our neceſſary Proviſion. Say to thy Soul, doſt thou not want Faith, Love, Sence of pardoning Mercy, ſtrength againſt Sin, a mortified Heart, quickning Grace? &c. Be not put off with a dumb ſilence, or a ſenſeleſs unconcernedneſs. Suffer not thy ſelf to reſt till thy heart hath received thoſe deep impreſſions of thy ſpecial wants, as may direct thy Faith to their ſupply; and put forth its ſtrength in wreſtling with thy Lord, who delights to be ſo overcome, and made a prey of. Our Lord Jeſus invites us to a happy freedom, and encourages us to a reverend boldneſs at this Feaſt. There is not a diſh, a dainty,

for *neceſſity* or *delight*; with which his Table is furniſhed: from partaking of which he prohibits, or diſcountenances any of his Children. His Language then is, *Eat O Friends, yea drink abundantly O Beloved. Buy of me Gold, &c.* And all the price on your part, is but a *begging willing Faith. Wilt thou be made Whole?* John 5. 6. And as not well pleaſed with general requeſts, provokes thee to be particular. *What wilt thou that I ſhould do unto thee?* John 5. 41.

And indeed 'tis a ſenſe of particular wants, which ordinarily meets with an anſwer of Grace. General requeſts imply ſelf-fulneſs, ignorance, unbelief, and heartleſsneſs. Such a frame will provoke Chriſt to ſend thee away empty. *Be it unto thee even as thou wilt*, will be no great riches to ſuch a Soul. Therefore as ever thou would'ſt have good ſpeed in this great work, get thine errands to Chriſt ready; let not this higheſt act of Religion be without its propoſed ends, which would write folly on the moſt inconſiderable undertaking.

CHAP. XVI.

CHAP. XVI.

Habitual Graces to be quickned as preparative to Receiving.

THat which St. *Paul* adviſes *Tim.* 2d Epiſtle 1. 6. *Stir up the Gift* (or Grace) *that is in thee*, is of ſpecial uſe before we enter on this great Action. Here eſpecially all our Graces ſhould be in a flame; which they will not eaſily ariſe to, after all the damps our hearts have taken in our converſe with Earth and Sin. And therefore the bellows muſt to work, before we have this uſe of our utmoſt fervor. A Faith half *aſleep*, a Love *luke-warm*, and a Repentance *crude* and *indigeſted*, will make but ſmall earnings and improvements at the Lord's Table. He that will feed hungrily and digeſt well, muſt ſtir up natural heat before ſet meals. O a Heart warmed with the kindly heat of active Graces, will ſweetly prepare the Soul to hunger, reliſh, and thrive on theſe Spiritual Dainties.

Queſt. But how ſhould a man thus quicken his Faith and other Graces?

Anſ. Take ſome one or more of the Promiſes, and ſet thy Faith on work on them.

Come

Come, for all things are ready. Add to this, *Him that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Add to the Meditation on Promises some Scripture-instances suitable to those Promises. The Lame, the Blind, the Lepers came to Christ; and he did not cast them off: they found the best welcome, even all and more than they came for. Apply these to thy own Soul thus, I never find Christ displeased with any that came to him for Mercy, for Body or for Soul; although I find him complaining of those that would not come to him *that they might have life*, John 5. 40. My Conscience discourages me, my unbelief fetters me, my Sins testify to my Face, that I am unworthy of the least of the Lord's Mercies. But what then? Shall I stay while conscience speaks more friendly? that will never be till it turn flatterer, or be sprinkled with the Blood of Christ. Shall I stay till I find no clogs of unbelief? Then I take the foolish course of keeping a distance from the Root and Life of Faith, without whom and his influence Faith will faint and fail altogether. Shall I stay while I am sinless? that will be never; or if it should come to pass, I were then out of Christ's Commission, who came to save sinners, not the righteous. Well, I know nothing by my self so bad, but others as bad have been

been welcome to Christ: and therefore if I have been a Prodigal, and what not? My Heart being willing to enter into the Lord's Family and service, I will go as the Prodigal, and hope for some fragments (at least) of his kind entertainment.

If that Parable of the Prodigal was by Christ intended as a Glass for poor Sinners, wherein to behold the tender heart, melting bowels, cordial smiles, and blessed entertainment from God of a returning Sinner: I will cast my eye thereon to spie out somewhat for my encouragement. But the first glance amazes me, how do I behold a throng of Testimonies, that the Father out-does the Prodigal Son, in all his motions towards mutual Reconciliation, and the most amicable embraces?

I see that the Father first sets eye on the coming Prodigal. O what comfort here! No sooner doth a man look towards God, but God looks after him, and directs his eye toward him and finds him out. *His Father saw him*, Luke 15. 20. yea he *saw him a great way off*. It had been singular mercy to have expressed any tokens of kindness, when the Prodigal drew very near. More than this I see his Father *had compassion on him*. Surely God is ready to forgive, is full of bowels. I see farther that

it

it was great and powerful compaſſion; for he *ran*. He ſeemed not to have patience till his prodigal Son came at him, nor would the tranſporting joyes which had captivated him, ſuffer him ſo much as to keep ſtate in his motions to his returning Son. O how is God overcome with Love, when his poor creatures have ſo far overcome their luſts, as to be in motion Godward! O that when Sinners come to to God, God ſhould run, Mercy ſhould run to meet them! The pinched ſtarved Sinner ariſes and comes, but God who needs neither Men, Angels, nor Heaven, (being a Heaven to himſelf) he *runs*. Why then O my Soul, ſhould'ſt thou ſlow and lag in going to God?

But what greeting do I behold, when a wronged neglected God meets with an unjuſt Apoſtate rebel fooliſh Sinner returning? No upbraidings, no frowns, no wrath, no ſpurnings at his ſinful miſery. O no! *He falls on his neck*, not to beat him down with blows and wounds, but to comfort him with kind embraces. He regards not all that guilt, meanneſs, and ſtink of the luſts he had ſerved; the beginnings of Repentance had won his heart, and its fragrancy out-ſcented all his ſinful vileneſs. O the ſtupendious and aſtoniſhing

ing goodneſs of God! If he embrace him while he is in theſe lothſome rags, ſmell's of the Swine and ſwill, luſts and vanity: what endearedneſs will there be, when his raiment ſhall be changed, and he ſhall look like one of the Sons of the moſt High?

But this viſion of Godlike Mercy is not yet at an end. *And he kiſſed him.* Is this the manner of men O Lord? Hath the great God his peer on Earth for condeſcending Love? What could be expected, but for the Prodigal to be kild, or at leaſt kickt out of doors? But to be kiſſed by God without more ado, let ſilence with amazement take the room of the higheſt phraſes too empty, too low, to attempt or offer at expreſſing this Love. *Eſau* fell on his Brother *Jacob's* neck, but they were not far from equals in nature, and *Jacob* was his better in Grace. What was that to the bowels of God? 'Tis obſervable that over the *Hebrew* Word for *kiſſed* Gen. 33. 4. there are three extraordinary pricks or pointings, to render it very notable. What remarques then will the kiſſes of God bear, of ſuch a Father to ſuch a Son? And now, O my Soul, if thou wert ſure that all this good ſhould be unto thee, would'ſt not thou think it worth thy going to thy Father's houſe, ſhaking off thy unbelief

belief and all thy miſeries together?

It may be you will ſay, this was firſt Repentance, Faith, or Converſion. What is all this to renewing Repentance, and exciting Graces for the Lord's Supper? I anſwer, that Converting Work, Faith, and Repentance dwells not within the confines of a ſingle day, month, or year; but takes poſſeſſion of the whole life of an upright Soul. And though we (as if Divine Love and its comfortable effects periſhed in the uſing) cool to thoſe bleſſings, which ſometimes have been as a holy Fire in our boſoms: God is no ſuch changeling; Repentance, Faith, and all Grace in their renewed acts, ſhall find themſelves well aſpected, and kindly entertained by him. And if we conſider, how apt we are to gather ſoil and pollutions; and to loſe the vivacity of our Graces in the crowd and throng of Worldly concerns; we ſhall find that as the Prieſts waſhed their hands, and their feet at every freſh entrance into the Tabernacle, *Exod.* 40. 31, 32. ſo we had need be waſhing and trimming our hearts: eſpecially every time we approach this holy of holies (as I may ſay) the Lord's Supper, the heavenly Feaſt, the Divine cheer and Communion.

CHAP. XVII.

CHAP. XVII.

Of exciting earneſt deſires after Chriſt and expectation of his Benefits.

IF Chriſt ſo vehemently longed for the Paſſeover (The Type and immediat forerunner of his own paſſion) in behalf of others, as is expreſſ'd Luke 22. 15. *With deſire have I deſired to eat this Paſſeover with you)* How then ſhould we long for that Feaſt, wherein a Crucified Jeſus is conveyed to our Souls, in that life and peace which his death and ſorrows purchaſed? Well may they be deemed unworthy of that Soul-cheering Wine and bleſſed Morſel, whoſe deſerts reach not ſo far as ſincere and fervent deſires. Thirſting after Chriſt hath the promiſe of his enjoyment; the Milk and Wine above price is to be had with this; and without which, all the Kingdoms of the World are a value that will be contemned. And as the Promiſe is made to Thirſting, ſo without it the cheer would be without taſte. *To the hungry every bitter thing is ſweet*: but without hungring, Chriſt himſelf the Fountain and *Epitome*

tome of all good and ſweetneſs would be unſavoury. Our hunger as it is all our worthineſs, ſo 'tis the greateſt part of our preparedneſs. *For he ſatisfieth the longing Soul, and fills the hungry with goodneſs*, Pſal. 107 9. *I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry-ground*, Iſai. 44. 3. A Soul drawn forth after God and Chriſt, will find the Heart and Hand of God enlarged to it. *Open thy mouth wide and I wil fill it*, Pſal. 81. 10. An enlarged heart ſhall meet with an enlarged hand.

Want of hungring and thirſting after Chriſt renders us not only empty, but alſo ſtopt Veſſels; which if they were thrown into the Ocean it ſelf would be never the fuller. Chriſt will do that for us which he commanded at the Wedding, *Fill the Water-pots* (with Wine) *up to the brim.* A hungerleſs Soul hath no capacity for Chriſt, and according to our hunger will be our filling. O how ſad to go empty away from ſuch cheer and treaſures, and all from our liſtleſs indiſpoſed hearts: and hereby give Chriſt occaſion to ſend this complaint after us, *Ye are not ſtraitned in me, but in your own bowels.* Yet let me warn you not to take up with the ſluggards deſire, meer idle wiſhes: *For the*

Soul

Soul of the ſluggard deſireth, and hath not, Prov. 13. 4. yea which is worſe, *The deſire of the ſlothful killeth him,* Prov. 21. 25. To none is there greater danger, than to thoſe who lean the weight of their Souls on idle hungrings. Commpaſſion it ſelf will ſuffer ſuch to periſh.

Queſt. How ſhould a man get his heart enlarged after Chriſt?

I *Anſwer,* Firſt get a ſenſe of his worth and thine own wants. The Prodigal when pinched will have a mind homeward, being ſenſible of his own wants and the fulneſs of his Fathers Houſe.

Secondly, Labour in private to ſtir up appetite. Enlarge thy heart by Prayer: one duty will appear for another. The ſame God that fills thy heart muſt open it. Cuſtomary formality undoes us. 'Tis our duty to labour for the meat that periſhes not. But if we do not by Spiritual endeavours get up our ſoul-appetites, the meat of Eternal life will be but periſhing food to us.

But alas! What miſtakes are men under, who are yet ſo deſirous of the Sacrament, that he which ſhall deny it them, though on grounds of apparent ignorance or prophaneneſs; ſhall be ſtarved out of his Faithfulneſs, reproached out of his duty and,

and shut out or banished from his Ministry, if they had their will? These men seem burning hot in their desires of this Ordinance. But alas! 'Tis too ordinary that this fire is not kindled from Heaven, but from a worse cause. Custom, reputation for Christians, superstitious respect to the meer formality of the Ordinance, are the best Trinity they adore in it. And it were somewhat better, if their Zeal arose not from a worse cause than all these; even a desire of securing their ungrounded peace, while their hearts and lives are woful enemies to God and the power of Godliness.

But if we would know whether our hungring and thirsting after this Ordinance be right, let us lay our hearts to these following tokens.

First, a true hungring &c. is carried after Christ as its Object, that the Soul might enjoy Fellowship and Communion with him, and those needful and Soul-blessing benefits that he purchased for Believers.

Secondly, It flowes from a sense of self-emptiness, and of Christ's fulness: or from a remembrance of former strength and sweetness, which we have found from Christ in this Ordinance.

Thirdly, It is attended with a Holy kind of impatiency till it enjoy the Ordinance,

nance, and Christ in it. True desires in case of delayes are turned into longings. *My Soul* thirsteth for God, when shall I come &c.

Fourthly, Nothing can quiet the heart, or satisfie it without Christ and the Blessings which are in and from him; no more than Gold or any thing else however valued, can satisfie the natural hunger and thirst.

Fifthly, Great delight and contentment in feeding on Christ. *I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.*

I shall here subjoin the strong grounds, on which a Soul may hunger after, and expect great things in this solemn Feast. When *Peter* and *John* went up to the Temple, they said to the Cripple *look on us.* They being Persons of eminent worth and power, it rationally drew forth the expectations of the poor wretch, who in the issue found their bounty beyond his thoughts. How much more may we ground great expectations from Christ, who not only commands us to look on him, have him in our remembrance, but gives us his Body and Blood; for not only our eyes, but our Souls to feed on: bids us take him as a Crucified Saviour, and

live

live on the provision of those unsearchable riches that are in him as our own. *Job* cleared himself (as from a great crime) of causing the eyes of the Widow to fail, *Job* 31. 16. As that which not only was uncharitableness, but also a strong savour of oppression. And can we think that an all-sufficient and compassionate Jesus, will be herein Guilty? Can we imagine that he should raise our expectations, and kindle our hungrings only to torment us with their disappointment? It cannot be, 'tis inconsistent with the substance and *series* of his design; yea with his very nature. Christ will mock none but those, whose pride and folly spurns his bounty, and prefers sin and vanity before him as their deity and dependance: and that for refusing his faithful tenders, and trusting to their own delusions.

CHAP. XVIII.

CAAP. XVIII.

God to be ſought by Prayer in a ſpecial manner before Receiving, and ſome Objections anſwered.

THis is the laſt thing I ſhall treat of by way of preparation. No buſineſs (eſpecially of concernment) ſhould be undertaken without Prayer. And indeed all Preparation without this to ſecure their efficacy, may juſtly be blaſted. *The Preparations of the heart in Man, and the anſwer of the Tongue is from the Lord*, Prov. 16. 1. When all our part is done, if God do not his, there will be nothing done to purpoſe. 'Tis he muſt crown with the bleſſing. All will be barren if he ſay not, be fruitful.

Secondly, Prayer Sanctifies every mercy, every Ordinance. *All things are Sanctified by the Word and Prayer*, 1 Tim. 4. The Word inſtructs us what we ſhould do and uſe, and how: but without Prayer, the moſt exact frame of our actions otherwiſe, will be but lame and unſerviceable.

Thirdly, The bleſſings of the Ordinance coming in upon faithful prayer, add a ſweet-

ſweetneſs to them. Upon theſe conſiderations therefore let us be ſtirred up to this duty in our Families and Cloſets, as well as with the Miniſter in the Celebration of the Ordinance. Yea if need be, to accompany it with Religious Faſting; for the caſting out thoſe Devils, which other means without it, may prove too ſhort of. The neglect of this ('tis to be feared) hath made the Feaſt of the Lord's Supper barren of that joy and ſtrength to many, which otherwiſe it might have afforded.

But after all that I have ſaid, and (it may be) you have done with all your might according to theſe Rules; you find your hearts ſtill unprepared and out of frame, dull, poor, unbelieving, dead, wandring, and full of faults, nothing almoſt as it ſhould be, you will enquire what you ſhall do, how you ſhall be ſatisfied in ſuch a caſe.

I anſwer firſt, It may be ſome ſatisfaction to thee, that thy want of diligence hath not been the cauſe of the diſorder thou complaineſt of: and more than that, thou haſt a precious proof herein of thy uprightneſs and integrity, which may be eſteemed a great reward of all the toil thou haſt taken to get thy heart in a better poſture. And although it would have been more comfortable

fortable to thy ſelf at preſent to have felt the fire of holy affections kindling into a clear flame, while thou art blowing the coals: yet thy Sincerity may meet with a gale from the Spirit of God, either on the brink of the Ordinance, or whiles thou art ſighing over thy deadneſs in the midſt of it; as may be time enough to make thee a plentiful Harveſt, and give thee a greater advantage to know the freeneſs of the Grace of God, to be diſpenced when he pleaſes, as *the wind blowes where it liſteth.* Yea, hereby the unexpected breathings of the powerful Spirit on thy heart, may be not only more ſweet, but captivating thee into an admiration and holy extaſie of delight, with the ſpouſe, Cant. 6. 12. *Or ever I was aware, my Soul made me like the Chariots of* Amminadib.

Sudden and unexpected good is moſtly moſt affecting. *And the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary Land* exceeding welcome. And who knows, but God may by hiding himſelf from thee (while you are moſt buſied to find his quickning preſence) break a great ſnare, and deliver thee from a temptation thou wert not well aware of? We are eaſily allured to ſacrifice to our nets, and glory in the work of our own hands: to brag of our duties and endeavours, as

if they had gotten us all these things; whereas, we are not only when we have done our all unprofitable to God, but also impotent in profiting our selves. 'Tis a crowning Mercy for God to hide pride from Man, kill the pride of duty, and put us upon giving him the all of the Glory of our spiritual successes.

Secondly, Take heed that thou bearest not false witness against thy self; a crime so much the greater as 'tis against nature: yea, shall I say? Take heed thou dost not herein bear false witness against God, by denying the Grace he hath really afforded thee. Let us not in our Zeal of hatred to our sinful distempers, bury any sparks of God's Grace together with them in their just ruines. 'Tis the frequent fault of pious persons (I had almost said a pious sin) to deny God's Goodness, with the acknowledgment of their own badness: as if denying God and our selves in this respect, were but the same thing. 'Tis hard for such trembling hands to hold the Scales even. Humility it self will sometimes play the Tyrant, though it turn the stroke alwayes against its own breast and bowels. Self-judging where it sins by extremity is commonly a good token of Grace and sincerity. *Paul* did in nothing more express

the

the greatneſs of his Sanctity, than in judging himſelf *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints* and the chiefeſt of Sinners, though in both there (at leaſt) ſeems an exceſs.

Object. 2d.

But if when we have done our duty, we are unprofitable Servants: what can I expect, who have not herein done my duty? I am conſcious to my ſelf of many neglects and ſhortneſs, in doing what was within my reach.

Anſ.

Firſt, The profitableneſs meant by that Text you allude unto, is never to be aim'd at by us; nor ever was within the power of Men or Angels. *If thou be righteous what giveſt thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand*, Job 35. 7. There can be no addition to abſolute perfection. And moreover, we return him nothing but what we firſt received from him: ſo that if we take it in the largeſt ſenſe, we muſt ſay as the Kingly Prophet, *Of thine own have we given unto thee.*

But Secondly, Though thy Preparations are ſhort, not only of what they ſhould and thou wouldeſt have them be, but alſo of what they might have been, had thy faithfulneſs anſwered thy opportunities: This, though it be ground of Repentance,

is no bar to thy Communion, nor makes thy hopes of the benefits desperate. Failings of this kind have their atonement and expiation in the blood of the Covenant, as well as any other. If we should make the unspottedness and perfection of any part of our duty, the necessary ground of our acceptance with God; we should not only hereby usurp upon the peculiar efficacy of Jesus our Mediatour, but also in all our addresses to God, lay a stumbling block in the way of our Faith and comforts. Therefore look chiefly to thy Sincerity, to thy Faithfulness in the main. If thou art heartily willing to be the Lord's, and aimest (in thy desires of Communion) that he may have thee more intirely his: Let not thy weakness and failings discourage thy Faith, the least sparks of which thy Lord will cherish, and to that end hath appointed this Ordinance.

Thirdly, Although after all thy strugglings to unfetter thy heart from these hopeless discouragements, thou find it yet in the same uncomfortable posture, Let the Command of Christ and sense of thy duty prevail with thee, to attend the Ordinance. There is more than meerly our comfort designed by God, and should be so by us in this Ordinance: *viz.* a Sanctifying

fying the Soveraignty and Lordſhip of Chriſt over us, by Obedience, an honouring a Crucified Jeſus, by atteſting to his Worthineſs, and the glorious ends and efficacies of his Death (in theſe reſpects ſhewing it forth); a profeſſion of our adherence to him, and not being aſhamed of him with reſpect to his Crucified poſture, which was to the *Jews* a ſtumbling block, and to the *Greeks* fooliſhneſs; with many other ends not to be now expreſſed. It will become thee, not to be ſo ſelfiſh as to mind only thine own things, and not the things which are Jeſus Chriſt's. This would ſavour too much of a mercenary Spirit: whereas to be doing our duty for Chriſt's ſake, when we have ſmall or no hope of comfort therein to our ſelves, is a mark of a holy *Hero*, one of the Lord's Worthies; and will in due time meet with a return from him, which will evidence that he highly values ſuch a frame of Soul.

Fourthly, Though thou fear and tremble to come to the Ordinance in thy fears, yet come. Thy fears probably have no other ground than thy falſe ſuſpitions, when thy languid hope hath the authority of Chriſt for its ſtrength and warrant. Fears are uncomfortable, preſumption is

too often damnable. A broken heart, a trembling and a contrite Spirit, are directly under the warm beams of the Promise. *I dwell with him who is of a contrite Spirit, and trembles at my Word.* When thou comest in feares (arising not from a distrust of God's, but thine own unfaithfulness) he is most likely to say to thee as to the Woman *Mark* 5. 33. who came to Christ in the same posture of *fear and trembling*, *Go thy way in peace.*

CHAP. XIX.

Of Meditation in the action of the Sacrament.

I shall now speak of the frame and deportment, which becomes us in the Communion; and wherein we may find its variety of blessings. The first I shall consider is the Meditating posture, its Necessity and Utility.

Meditation on holy things, as it rifles into all within its reach, to find out such objects which are most suitable to fix it self upon; so having found them, it dwells on them

them for farther discovery and improvement: not only piercing more and more into their secret veins, but also impressing the things brought to light upon the affections; endeavouring such a union to the objects, as is no less than a transforming the subject so imployed into their likeness, according to the import of 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord; are changed into the same image, &c.*

What is presented to us in the Lord's Supper, is no less than all the glorious Mysteries of the Gospel in a scheme, or rather in their root and fountain-head: and therefore calls for the most serious and intelligent Meditation, to infer the excellent admonitions so lively and in so small a Map couched, and to call forth the several Graces suitable thereunto in a due exercise. And as there is no Ordinance which doth more forcibly stir the holy affections of the meanest Babe in Christ; so there is none doth more exercise the most profound reach of the most grown and learned in Christ's School. Its outside is like the Wood of the Vine, of all others the most despicable; yet containeth in it a virtue bringing forth the most excellent fruit, the Wine which (as saith *Jotham's* Parable) cheers both

God and man. And although God (to whom all things are alwayes naked and bare) needs not Meditation; yet we need it to preſs out this Vintage, & warm our Souls with the Spirits of this Ordinance. *While I was muſing* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *the fire burned*, Pſal. 39. 3. there is ſomewhat more to be done in this holy action than a meer looking on, an idle ſpectatour will prove but an ignorant and gainleſs Receiver. *Chriſt's offering up himſelf before us, calling for our offering up our ſelves to God through him: and our compliance with this call*, is a Theme capable of (I was going to ſay) infinite enlargements; all which muſt be wrought-out, and as it were wire-drawn through holy Meditation.

The work of the Corporal-eye and Ear is but ſmall to that of the faculties of the Soul. The ſight of Bread and Wine broken and poured forth, with the words of inſtitution, *This is my Body broken for you, this is the Cup of the new-Teſtament in my Blood which is ſhed for you, and for the remiſſion of all your ſins:* though they ſet forth lively a Crucified Chriſt; yet when theſe few things are ſeen and heard, their improvement calls for all that is within us to be put on their higheſt and utmoſt exerciſe. *Meditation* (ſaith Auſtin) *verily feeds our underſtanding, under-*

derſtanding our affections, and our affections raiſes our devotion. Lib. 3. *de Spir. & Anim. My Meditation of him ſhall be ſweet,* Pſal. 104. 33. And why ſo? But becauſe by Meditation he taſted the ſweet of that Divine object. Are we to reflect powerfully on the Love of God and Chriſt; our own ſinfulneſs, (the occaſion of this expreſſion of that Love)? it muſt be done by Meditation. Would we draw forth the precious Promiſes and Covenant of pardon, favour of God, Glory to come, it muſt be by Meditation. Should we get bruiſed broken bleeding hearts, offered up to God from a holy Sympathy with our bleeding Saviour, but more from the ſenſe of thoſe ſpots and guilt we had contracted on our Souls by ſin, which nothing below this blood, this offering, would do away? it muſt be by Meditation. Would we call up every Grace, as a ſpikenard giving forth their ſmell for the delightful entertainment of our Lord? it muſt be by Meditation. It was no impertinent admonition which *Moſes* gave to the people, when he took the blood of the Peace-offering, *and ſprinkled it on the people, and ſaid; behold the blood of the Covenant.* Yet we may ſuppoſe he intended the Souls beholding its meaning and ends by Meditation, as the main end of faſtning

the eyes of their bodies on that object. And 'tis certain, that although the duties of this Ordinance are not done, nor its benefits obtained by the meer efficacy of thinking and ratiocination; so neither are they effected by or on us as by a charm: but God and our Redeemer will accompany with a blessing our industry in the holy improvement of our natural faculties; directed by his command, and moved by his Gracious Promise.

CHAP. XX.

Of the exercise of Faith, Repentance, Humility, Hope, Love, and Joy in the Communion.

AS in this Holy and Mystical Ordinance, are expressed the stupendious wayes of God, in conveying his matchless Love to Sinners, and the glorious fruits and priviledges of the Saints the effects of it: so it calls for the utmost exercise of every Grace under the sense of what is herein exhibited. God doth in this Feast produce the best fare that Heaven and Earth affords,

affords, for the entertainment of his Chi'dren; and he expects we ſhould not come to him in this addreſs empty-handed. Now is the time to bring forth all thoſe pleaſant fruits, which we have laid up in ſtore for our beloved Jeſus: and to have our hearts in that dreſs, as may render our Communion moſt acceptable to our Bridegroom, our Redeemer and Lord. *While the King ſitteth at his Table my ſpikenard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof*, Cant. 1. 12. The Communion (according to the import of the Word) is a mutual participation of, and delight in the perſon and graces of Chriſt, and his eſpouſed ones: the injoyments of both in their ſuitable exerciſe and improvement, are the furniture of this Table. I ſhall briefly touch on the exerciſe of the ſeveral Graces in their order, expreſſed in the contents of this Chapter.

In this Exercise, Faith muſt be the leader; or (ſhall I ſay alſo) the companion, the ſtrength, the Soul of all the reſt. Without the Exerciſe of which, all the reſt will be but as in a dead ſleep. As we act Faith on Chriſt, ſo will our Repentance, Love, Joy, &c. gird up their loins, and put forth their ſtrength in this ſervice. Therefore call on your faith as *Deborah* on her ſelf, Judges 5. 12. *Awake, awake my Faith: awake,*

awake, awake, utter a ſong: Lift up thy ſelf to behold, to be affected with, and ſhew forth the praiſes of a Crucified Redeemer. Feed on the fat, and eat the ſweet of this Peace-offering, this feaſt of Love. Drink deep of this Fountain of Life, this Well of Salvation, till it become in thy own Soul a Well ſpringing up unto Spiritual, and Eternal Life, brim-ful, and running-over.

And firſt of all, let Faith look on Chriſt as the Gift of the Father, that God the Father may not be left out of thy Creed, and reſpect in thy Exerciſe on ſo glorious a Subject; but may be a ſharer in thy Love, Praiſes, and Admiration. It was he who ſent Chriſt, anointed and ſealed him for this bleſſed work of our Redemption: It was he that gave his only Son to be an *Iſaac* to us, a Child of laughter; by taking the ſowre away into his own Soul, that had put unpleaſantneſs into all our mercies, and death at the bottom of our cup. Let us fix the eye of Faith on the Father as the giver, the giver up of this great gift for a ſin-offering; and therein for a peace-offering. Jeſus Chriſt as God is the begotten of the Father, as Man the work of the Father, his Creature: as in the office of Redeemer, the Servant of the Father; as effecting

ing Redemption, the Salvation of the Father.

Secondly, Let Faith on this consideration look on the Father as Reconciled; Christ being a Propitiation of his own providing, a Messenger and Performer of the Covenant of his own making; and on whom he laid the iniquities of us all: yea such a Propitiation that not only bare Testimony of himself, when giving up the Ghost, that his work that his Father gave him to do was finished; but which also the Fathers Testimony, by raising him from the dead, delivering him out of that last bond, and exalting him to that Glory and Crown proposed as the reward from the Father for finishing our Redemption; that herein signifying that he is well pleased with Christ, and in him with all those that are interested in his Death.

Thirdly, Faith should from hence infer, not only Pardon, Justification, Sanctification, and eternal Glory and Happiness to be the portion of every Believer in due time, which God doth precisely and expressly promise in his Word: but should also conclude the readiness of the Father, to shew all manner of kindness to Believing Sinners, seeing his Love was so great to them, as not to withold from them his only Son. This was the wise improvement

ment the Apoſtles Faith made of this gift of God, Rom. 8. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* This act of Faith would cure many a carnal perplexing care.

Fourthly, Let Faith be acted on a Crucified Chriſt repreſented by the Bread broken, and the Wine poured forth; and that to confirm the Father's Love to be of that degree to us, as is ſufficient to overcome all difficulties: and that all the good of the Covenant is purchaſed by Chriſt at the hand of *juſtice it ſelf*, as well as of mercy; a Crucified Chriſt being the full price of our ranſom from all ſins entanglements. *That he might be juſt and the Juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus*, Rom. 3. 26. And when Objections ſhall ariſe, either from the infinite Nature of God offended, or the many-wayes aggravated Offences thou art guilty of, let thy Faith in this tragical act of the Lord Jeſus, draw-forth proofs of the reaſonableneſs of God's ſatisfaction in this Offering, and his being pleaſed with thee in particular, to whom he hath given this pledge of his Favour, and proof of his Reconciliation. Certainly, there is enough in a Crucified Chriſt, to render Faith guided by the Promiſe to the higheſt pitch, to be a reaſonable Faith.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Let Faith behold in this ſpectacle the Alſufficiency & Omnipotency of Chriſt; his Alſufficiency, as being God-Man; made by the Father an Offering for Sin, and thereby all the treaſures of both Natures united in one Perſon laid up in him, to be laid out on us; his Omnipotency in maſtering Satan, the wrath of Men, the fears and pains of nature, yea the fierce diſpleaſure of the Almighty, and the bonds of a violent death; by which he could not be holden, when once the Divine Omnipotency ſtirred up it ſelf to ſhake off thoſe fetters from his Humane Body. What cannot ſuch a Champion do in us and for us, who hath triumphed over all theſe, and led captivity captive.

Sixthly, Faith ſhould here Feaſt the Soul with all thoſe Divine perfections of Chriſt, which render him a beauty ſurpaſſing all created beings; and eſpecially that perfect Love to us, that moved him to fulfil all Righteouſneſs active and paſſive for us: not neglecting thoſe graces of Faith, Patience, Humility, Self-denial, which had ſuch a fiery and bloody tryal: all which together render his complexion pure Red and White, complicated of a ſinleſs guiltleſs and matchleſs paſſion: innocency and ſuffer-

ſufferings meeting together in him in their perfection.

Seventhly, Let Faith conſider this Ordinance as inſtituted and bleſſed by Chriſt, for the conveyance of the Wiſdom, Love, Power, and the unſearchable Riches treaſured up in him to the Souls of his believing ones: for their ſtrength, comfort and aſſurance; for the carrying them on cheerfully and ſtedfaſtly, in the wayes of grace to their everlaſting reſt. 'Tis Chriſt's Inſtitution and Bleſſing that puts a power into an Ordinance as mighty and effectual as he pleaſes; and he is engaged not to leave his own appointments without the concurſe of his effectual preſence, where great unbelief and provocations tempt him not to turn the cock, and ſeal up the fountain from ſending-forth its uſual living Waters. *When Chriſt was preaching, the power of the Lord was preſent to heal them*, Luke 5. 17. God could have given the Holy Ghoſt to *Paul* without the Miniſtry of *Ananias*, but that being God's way it muſt be brought about thereby. *In all places where I record my Name, I will come to thee and bleſs thee*, Exod. 20. 24. Chriſt's Inſtitution and Bleſſing will make the hard *rock to pour-forth Oyl*. The Power of God is ſo Almighty, as thereby to ſubdue all things

things to himself; and make any means, effectual to what ends he pleases.

Lastly and above all, Let thy Faith be imployed in receiving Christ: for that is the condition without which all other acts of Faith are unfruitful. *To as many as received him &c.* John 1. 12. What are we the better for believing all this good to be in a Crucified Christ and also promised by God; unless we receive it? 'Tis receiving that enriches us. We should receive him in the Promise as tendred by the Word, but here (somewhat more significantly) we should take him as a pledge and earnest. And we must take heed that we receive Christ in the first place as God the Father hath tendred him, a Prince and a Saviour; and with him the benefits that redound through him to Believers. He that is all for the benefits, and nothing for the person and dominion of Christ, loses all.

To encourage our Faith to these actings, let the following considerations possess our thoughts.

First, That Christ hath all his fulness for the enriching of his Members: his abundance is in order to his overflowing: his *full* fulness, to his *filling* fulness. *And of his fulness have we all received &c.* John 1. 16.

1. 16. *The fulneſs of him that fills all in all*, Epheſ. 1. 23.

Secondly, That the Sacrament is deſigned by Chriſt to encourage and actuate Faith. And indeed though God's power be alwayes preſent with the Inſtitution, it will not work to our benefit, if Faith be abſent or altogether idle. What boots it if the Well be nigh and plentiful, if we have no pitcher to let down and draw? *He made him to ſuck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock.* Thus (alluding) if we would have the Honey out of the Rock Chriſt, Faith muſt *ſuck* it. We muſt wring out the Waters of a full cup.

Conſider farther that in this action Believers do as really receive Chriſt into their Souls, as they receive the Bread and Wine into their Bodies. Faith lifting up the everlaſting Doors, the King of Glory comes in. Faith receiving Sacramental tenders, calls Chriſt and all that is his the Souls propriety: his Death, Reſurrection, Life, yea Heaven purchaſed by him: and this is indeed the Communion of the Blood of Chriſt. Chriſt in the Sacrament preſents himſelf to us, and bids us as *Thomas*) put the hands of Faith into his Wounds, and thereby be confirmed. The Blood of Chriſt (in this Ordinance to be applyed) is a Sanctifying

ctifying Blood. *Heb.* 13. 12. makes us to be conſecrated and ſeparated to God: a mortifying blood to ſin and luſt, *Rom.* 2. 3. A ſoftning blood, that turns a heart of Adamant into a heart of Fleſh, tender and ſenſible of ſpiritual good and evil, *Zech.* 12. 10. A quickning blood, that hath life and ſtrength in it, the life-Blood of Chriſt is life and ſtrength to a Believer. *Heb.* 13. 20, 21. Juſtifying blood, that renders Believers juſt in the ſight of God; Cordial blood. What was killing blood to Chriſt as poured out, is cheering Wine to us taken in by Faith. Healing blood to a broken heart and wounded Conſcience, *with his ſtripes we are healed.* No wounds ſo deadly but the death of Chriſt rightly applyed will cure.

CHAP. XXI.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Meditation, Repentance, and Faith at the Sacrament.

BEing come to the Lord's Table, it followes to be considered what behaviour is there required. Without a care of this, all former Preparation is lost as to the benefit of this Ordinance. There are some Duties in which the *whole Congregation* joyn together, in which we must free our selves from all looseness and evagation of Spirit; but these I intend not to insist on. There are some special Duties which every one is obliged privately to perform. In general, they are *an offering up ourselves to God in an holy and spiritual disposition.*

And first *by Meditation.* This layes that to the heart which must bruise it and heal it; kill Sin, and quicken our Graces and Comforts. *My Meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord.* Consider what is set before thee in Sacramental Elements, Actions and Promises. Behold what a Feast God hath prepared for thee, *A Feast of fat things, a Feast of Wine on the lees; a Feast of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined,* to feed and fat-

fatten our lean Souls. Here we ſee Chriſt Crucified before our *eyes*, hanging and bleeding on the Croſs, preſſed and cruſhed under the heavie preſſure of his Fathers *infinite* wrath. Behold now the Lamb of God ſhedding his precious Blood, to take away thy Sins: that Goat who is both the *ſlain* and the *ſcape*-Goat, bearing thy ſins by ſuffering, and alſo carrying them away into the land of Eternal forgetfulneſs.

Let all the ſorrows of Chriſt's Paſſion be the object of thy thoughts, all the ſorrows which were the effects of the wrath both of *God and Men*. The darkneſs that covered the face of the Earth at that time, was but a *ſhadow* of that *blackneſs* of darkneſs that was upon his *Soul*, when he ſtood in our ſtead undertaking for us; and without which, we in our *own perſons* muſt have ſuffered the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever. How many were the pains of his *body* by the inhumane uſage of his barbarous enemies? What the bitterneſs of his *Soul* under all the reproaches, contempts, and abuſes caſt upon him; as though he were the very *ſink* to receive their *ſordes* and filth. Earth and Hell conſpired to make his miſery *matchleſs*; yet all this was not enough, his dear Father whom he never diſpleaſed adds more

ſorrows and greater to the reſt, by withdrawing his Countenance. O his frowns were they that gave the death-blow to his Soul, and *broke his heart*. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*, was his dying words, expreſſing the *Paroxyſm* of his Paſſion.

Behold here as in a Glaſs the *greatneſs* of Sin. Surely Sin muſt be another thing than men commonly eſteem it. Let out your hearts eſpecially in the admiration of that unmatchable Love and Goodneſs expreſſed from God to thee in the work of Redemption. Labour to comprehend its length, breadth, height, and depth, *And to know the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledg*. What heart is able to do this ſufficiently? *What is Man* (O Lord) *that thou ſhould magnifie him, and ſet thine heart upon him?* How ſhould this fire our hearts with Love to God and Chriſt? and put us into the ſame poſture with *David*? Pſal. 39. 3. *My heart was hot within me, whilſt I was muſing the fire burned*. There is not a paſſage in all Chriſts ſufferings, but may ſet forth his Love to thee, and kindle thine to him. *We will remember thy Love more than Wine*. This is a Sacrament of remembrance, yet not of a bare *cogitation*; but of ſuch a remembrance as is accompanied with

with ſuitable *impreſſions and effects*: and they are theſe which follow.

First, *A Godly ſorrow for ſin, eſpecially for our own.* What pierced Chriſt ſhould pierce us; conſidering that our ſins were more eminently the cauſe, than the *Jews* or *Pilate*, or the *Souldiers*; yea more the *traitours* than *Judas*. The Paſſeover was to be eaten with bitter herbs. That Paſſion expreſſed *Zech.* 12. 10. is ſomewhat ſhort of what is called for in this Ordinance. *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn, and be in bitterneſs for him, as one that mourns for his only Son; as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.* And this ſhould be not only with a *compaſſionate*, but alſo a *practical* ſorrow. And is there not a *cauſe*, when our ſins were not only the *root* of the thorns and croſs that wounded and kild our Redeemer, but alſo put an inexpreſſible *poyſon and venom* into them? It was we who did eat the ſowre Grapes that ſet his Teeth on edg: we that *ſtole* the forbidden fruit, and he that made the *ſatisfaction*.

Thus ſhould our eyes affect our hearts. The Sacrament of the Supper ſhould be turned into a Baptiſm of tears. Alas, for the hardneſs of our hearts! That we can think of our Lord and behold him all in gore

gore blood for our ſins; not only his five Wounds ſtreaming out blood, but all the *pores* of his body as one ſluce, and yet our hearts not rent and melt, and our eyes become a fountain. Call for mourning-hearts, if they are *deaf* to you, turn commands into complaints. Ah our rocky hearts, harder than the neather mil-ſtone! If this won't do, turn complaints into prayer: Lord ſmite theſe hearts of ours, that they may open to thee and their Duty.

The Second is, *A ſolemn renewing of our Vows and Covenant with God*; renounce all our luſts and vanities, to walk more cloſe and watchfully. The Sacrament is of the quality of a binding Oath, the name came from ſuch a practice among the *Latins*. In the hour wherein thou receiveſt it, avouch the Lord to be thy God, and that thou wilt walk in his wayes. We have no reaſon to think that God will avouch us for his people, unleſs *we bind* our ſelves to take him for our God. Covenants are *mutual*, if either party *conſent not*, there can be no Covenant.

Thirdly, *The Exerciſe of Faith*. This is the chief work of the Sacrament. A Chriſt *offered* calls for nothing more than *receiving* Chriſt. In order to this we are to conſi-

der

der, that Christ is an all-sufficient fulness. *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* What-ever is required in a Mediator is in him to the full. He hath fulness of Merit, of Grace, of the Spirit to convey these and their advantages to Believers. *He hath the seven Spirits of God*, Rev. 3. 1. And all these are his Treasures, stored up in him to be laid out upon us. Christ is filled with riches and treasures to this very end, 'tis a fulness to overflow, *Full of Grace and Truth, and of his fulness have we all received, &c.* John 1. 14. There is enough in him to fill all the empty hungring Souls in the World. And his fulness is such, that it abates nothing by all the supplies it affords to all the Saints in Heaven and Earth. This Ordinance is by him appointed for a conveyance of this fulness. He hath Sanctified it to this use. He hath Blessed it to convey to us all the Blessings that grew on his Cross. And what will not this Ordinance effect to a Believer, when it comes as Christ's Plenipotentiary with a full Commission from him. Though Christ *can*, yet he doth not *ordinarily* convey his favours and benefits but by the Golden pipes of his Ordinances; in these the Lord anoints his People with *fresh*-Oyl.

The way to make this Ordinance *effectual*, is by setting Faith on work. Christ is a full and deep Well of Life; but if Faith act not, the Bucket is not let down. The power of Faith takes hold on, and lyes open to the Gracious power of God in this Ordinance. Faith turns the cock and makes the Waters of Life run into our vessels *freely*. Thus disposed we may with joy draw Water out of the Wells of Salvation. Yea, this Rock Christ will pour forth to us Rivers of Oyl. 'Tis said of Israel, Deut. 32. 13. *He made him* suck *Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty-Rock.* If Faith *suck* not, the *Rock Christ* will yield nothing. *That ye may* suck *and be satisfied with the breasts of her Consolation*, Isa. 66. 11. Faith thus acting will draw these full breasts to satisfaction. When therefore we are come to this Table, let us set all the powers of Faith on work.

Question.

But how and in what manner is Faith to be actuated in this Ordinance?

Answer.

First, *On Sacramental offers.* Let Faith as verily receive and apply Christ and all his benefits, as Christ offers them. *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and the King of Glory shall come in.* We should not give Christ

Christ a narrow, but an abundant entrance, suitable to the glory of his Person, and the train of attendants and Blessings he brings along with him.

Secondly, *On Sacramental Promises.* In Taking and Eating and Drinking the Body and Blood of Christ by Faith, Christ doth promise that Reconciliation, Pardon, Quickning, which is the Virtue and Benefit of *his* Death. Let Faith now believe that the Body of Christ is given, and the Blood of Christ shed for *thee in particular*, who receivest this Ordinance by Christ's Command. Let such an one say, *Lord I believe*, and cheerfully and gladly apply to mine own Soul, what thou hast tendred and bestowed on thy people in a Crucified Christ. Say boldly Christ is mine, Pardon is mine, God is mine, and Heaven is mine.

Thirdly, *On Sacramental Representations.* The Death of Christ, or Christ as Crucified is there represented to thee. The broken Bread Represents a bruised *broken* Jesus, fitted as food for thy Soul: the Wine poured out, a bleeding Jesus, a Christ overcoming, by the utmost sufferings, all that stands in the way of thy Salvation. It represents not a lifeless, but a *powerful* Blood; not a dumb, but an interceding

crying Blood, that cryes louder to God for mercy and peace for thy Soul, than ever the Blood of *Abel* cryed for vengeance on his cruel unbrotherly murderer. Faith should put its hands into the *wounds* of Christ, yea suck the Blood of those *wounds* with a holy greedines, as the Balm and Wine of healing and refreshment to thee, and as mortal poyson to thy Sins and Lusts.

Faith should Anatomize a Crucified Christ, and be prying into every *vein* of strength and comfort that is wrapt up in him as such; reading a lecture to thy self hereby of the powers and uses of the Blood of Christ, as a Sanctifying, Purging, Cleansing, Mortifying, Mollifying, Strengthning, Cheering, Quickning Blood: a Blood that opens the Prison doors to set *thee free*, and opens the wards of the Love and Heart of God; yea of all the Treasures that Heaven consists of. Now according to these qualities of the Blood of Christ, apply them to thy self and proper objects: a *cleansing* Blood to a *polluted* heart and life, his Blood as *softning* to a *hard* heart, as *mortifying* to *strong-lusts*, as *quickning* to *weak* Graces, &c.

Let Faith (when Conscience reads the Indictment of thy Sin, and pleads guilty; pur-

purſuing thy Soul to a Sentence of death) flee to Chriſt, to that munition of Rocks as thy City of refuge, in this or ſuch-like pleas. True indeed, I have Tranſgreſſed, and that beyond the accuſation of my Conſcience, which hath not been ſo diligent and exact a recorder of my ſinful converſation, but it hath let ſlip many a paſſage of *aggravated* offences, beſides *leſſer* faults: but my Lord Jeſus the Eternal Son of God hath taken the Sentence, and *ſtrokes* due to me into his own Body and Soul; and by his Wounds I am healed. My Conſcience, that in anſwer to the *Law* indited me for a damned Sinner, in anſwer to the Goſpel clears me as a juſtified perſon, and a beloved Child. I need not fear to look ſin and wrath in the face, while my Lord as Crucified ſtands by ſaying, Be of good cheer, he is *near* that *juſtifieth* thee, who ſhall *condemn* thee? Hath Sin diſhonoured God, and wounded thy Soul? Behold my Head Crowned with ſmarting contempt, my Hands and Feet wounded with nails, my Face of Divine Glory ſpit on, my Heart, my Soul melted with ſorrow. Here is diſhonour for diſhonour, wounds for wounds, death for death. Here is all that the Law would have inflicted on *thee*, apparent in their wounds and diſho-

nour on my Body, & the ſorrow of my Soul. O thou Dove, make thy Neſt in the ſides of theſe Rocks; let the Faith of theſe things fill thy heart with a holy Security, and ſtrong Conſolation.

Add to theſe, high and holy thank-givings to the Lord, from an heart affected and enlarged with the ſenſe of Goodneſs. As he hath filled thy Soul with Food, let it be alſo filled with Gladneſs in him the Giver. What ſhould now follow but, *My Soul ſhall praiſe thee with joyful Lips.* When Men are filled with Wine, they Sing, they Shout. There may be exceſs in that, but not in having ſuch holy effects of this Wine, this Feaſt. This duty is intimated by the *hymn* Chriſt and his Diſciples Sang together at the End of the Supper. And 'tis obſervable that the Pſalms Sung by *Iſrael* at the Paſſeover, *viz.* 113, and the 5 following (one of which 'tis concluded Chriſt Sang at the Supper) are called the *great Halelujah.* This they began to Sing after the Cup of wine, calling it the Cup of the *hymn*, or of praiſe.

Laſtly, We ſhould at this time be in the exerciſe of holy Love. Looking on our fellow-Members Communicating with us, we ſhould cleave to them in one Spirit as Members of the ſame Body with them.

1 Cor.

1 Cor. 10. 17. *We drink* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *into one Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. Neither muſt we forget now the exerciſe of Mercy and Compaſſion to the Members of Chriſt, who are poor in this World. To practice this is to begin betime to pay our Vows, and make ſome proof that we underſtand and mean what we profeſs, in, and at Partaking of the Lord's Supper.

CHAP. XXII.

Of ſuch Duties as muſt follow Receiving.

THere ought to be a ſpecial care of Duties incumbent on us after, as well as before or in Receiving: the neglect of this may mar all. Unſuitable actions may deſtroy meat in the digeſtion, and turn it into diſeaſes, though it were well prepared, and eaten with a good appetite; but eſpecially after Phyſick taken, the body ſhould be well ordered, both in reſpect of Diet and Exerciſe, but eſpecially that we take not ſudden cold. And indeed this Feaſt is Medicinal, its very Food is Phyſick

Administred for our recovery to that Spiritual Healthfulness, which the diseases of Sin had destroyed. This Care stands in two things.

First, *In Examination*; *How* God hath dealt with a Communicant? what welcome, what friendship and Communion with Christ he hath found? What quickning and comforting Vertue Christ hath let into his Soul? If a man have found no answer from Heaven, but that his heart was dead and drooping; then first let him suspect himself that he was not well prepared, or attended not his Duty in the Ordinance. And having found out the hinderances, judg thy self and be seriously humbled for them. If thou dost thus 'tis a sign thou hast not lost all thy labour, for God hath given thee a sensible and tender heart, though he hath not filled it with Joy and Comfort.

Secondly, Endeavour by *after-pains* in Prayer to quicken that Duty to an efficacy. Ordinances have their after-Births, they do not alwayes work in the Reception. That Food which is received with little relish or sensible Spirits, may digest to an abundance of strength and healthfulness of Soul. 'Tis said of *Saul* that *when he turned his back from* Samuel; *God gave him another heart,*

heart, 1 Sam. 10. 9. The Spirit came not upon him *in* but *after* Anointing. It were ill with many a poor Soul if they never had found other benefit by this Ordinance than in the action it ſelf. 'Tis a fault in too many to leave all their Devotion behind them when they come from the Ordinance, and 'tis not without fault to neglect to recover *afterward* that which they obtained not before.

But if upon ſearch we find that we have not received without fruit, then bleſs the Lord for his unſpeakable Mercy with all thy Soul. Be careful and watchful to keep up that holy Frame. Say to thy ſelf *it is good for me to be here*, as the Diſciples when they beheld the Glory ofChriſt in the Mount. Endeavour to keep up that height of Gracious Affections, Holy Reliſhes, and Reſolutions wrought in you at the Ordinance. When *David* ſaw the hearts of the people ſweetly enlarged, he prayes, *O Lord keep this for ever in the imagination of the thought of the heart of thy people for ever, and prepare thier heart unto thee*, 1 Chron. 29. 18. When at *Hezekiah's* Paſſeover they found the hearts of the people warmed and raiſed, they took counſel, and kept other ſeven dayes with gladneſs.

And this by way of *Proportion* teaches us, to keep alive as long as may be this holy fire, when kindled by the preſence of God with us at his Ordinance. 'Tis a groſs, hurtful, and ungrateful miſcarriage, for Men to fall to Earthly conference at the very *threſhold* of ſuch Duties; quenching the Spirit, and taking cold to a *Soul-hardning*, as Iron heated red-hot by putting into the Water. Verily this is a juſt Provocation to the Lord to withold ſuch ſlighted, and unprized Mercies, 'Tis a token of a very damp and earthy heart, when a holy fire on the overnight, ſhall leave neither ſpark nor warmth to the next morning.

The laſt thing to be done is to expreſs the power and efficacy of this Ordinance, by keeping our Vows and Covenants we made to and with the Lord. Our hearts are very treacherous, fickle, and ſlippery; and we have need to look narrowly to them. Satan and Corruption are moſt longing to break looſe, when bound with new-cords. The Devil knows that after ſuch experiences, and devotedneſs to God; our withdrawings will be more ſinful, diſcouraging, and incurable. *Eljiah* after he was fed by God, went in the ſtrength of that food fourty dayes and fourty nights. It were well if we could make ſuch an

im-

improvement of the Lord's-Table refreſhments.

When Wiſdom had ſlain her Beaſts, mingled her Wine, and furniſhed her Table, Prov. 9. 5, 6. *Come* (ſaith ſhe) *eat of my Bread and drink of the drink which I have mingled.* But what doth ſhe require after this? *Forſake the fooliſh and live, and go in the way of underſtanding.* This is the thing which God looks for at our hands. *When we go from the Lord's Table* (ſaith Chryſoſt.) *let us (revolving in our minds the Love there expreſſed to us from the Lord) as Lyons breath out fire, and become terrible to the very Devil.* ad Pop. Hom. Let us ſhew by mortified luſts, and more powerful obedience, the good uſe we have made of this Proviſion. O how ſoon are men's Vows forgotten, and they returned to their old channel? It was Supendious Impudence of the Harlot, *Prov.* 7. 14, 18. to play the Whore the ſame day ſhe had been at the Altar: to Sacrifice to the Devil ſo ſoon after ſhe had been Sacrificeing to God. A common thing with Popiſh Prieſts to riſe from the Harlots bed to Conſecrate the Sacrament: and to remove again from that to the *Harlots*-Bed. What is this but to take *poyſon* after *Phyſick?* O conſider the Vows of God that are upon you

you, and that they are as ſtrong and binding ſeven years after, as at the ſame *moment* wherein they were made. As the Baptiſmal Vow, ſo that of the Supper binds to the day of our death.

For the farther impreſſing of this conſider, that without Perſevering Obedience the Lord eſteems ſuch ſervices none at all: yea he eſteems it no leſs than treaſon; *But they like men have tranſgreſſed my Covenant, there have they dealt treacherouſly againſt me*, Hoſ. 6. 7, In that wherein they ſuppoſe they had done God great ſervice, in that they moſt treacherouſly abuſed him. And what is more provoking than treachery? Treachery is a Sin none are capable of but perſons Covenanting.

Secondly, Conſider that in neglecting a Holy walking with God after this Ordinance, we pollute the Name of God, and become guilty of Spiritual Perjury; a Sin abhorred among men in civil things, and *no leſs* but *much more* ſinful in Spiritual things, and provoking to God: the *matter* and the *parties* of the Covenant, being incomparably more conſiderable. In the Lord's Supper we Covenant to be his, in Faith, Obedience, and Dependance; wilfully to neglect *all* or *any* of theſe, is a black crime after ſuch engagements. *For a man*

to

to Vow, and not to keep his Vow, what is it but Perjury (ſaith Bern.)? How ſeverely did God threaten *Zedekiah* for breaking his Covenant with the King of *Babylon*, a Heathen and Oppreſſor? *Shall he eſcape that doth ſuch things? or ſhall he break the Covenant and be delivered?* God hath ſworn that he will be revenged on ſuch as are forſworn: Wo then to that man who breaks his Covenant with God. The Lord will not be mocked, and it is an unnatural Sin for us to mock and abuſe our ſelves in a matter of ſuch moment. Thus we have in faithfulneſs opened to you your duty *before*, *in*, and *after* this precious Ordinance: and *they that walk according to this rule, Peace ſhall be upon them and Mercy, and upon the Iſrael of God*, Gal. 6. 6.

A SACRA-

A
Sacramental
CATECHISM;

Wherein by way of Queſtion and Anſwer, the Doctrine and Ordinance of the Lord's Supper is explained: and ſeveral caſes of Conſcience relating thereunto Reſolved.

Queſt.

WHAT *is an Ordinance commonly called a* Sacrament?

Anſ. A Seal of the *Covenant* of God in Chriſt, wherein by certain *outward* ſigns appointed by Jeſus Chriſt, *Chriſt* with all his *benefits* are ſignified, conveyed, and ſealed to the *worthy* Receiver.

Queſt. *Why is the Lord's Supper called a* Sacrament?

Anſ.

Anſ. The Word Sacraments have been anciently uſed to expreſs both Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, and was taken up by ſome of the Fathers from the uſe of it among the *Latins*; it being a military Oath and Solemnity by which the Soldier was engaged to his duty: and it was with them ſo Sacred a thing, that it was not lawful for any man to profeſs himſelf a Soldier till he had taken that Oath or Sacrament.

Queſt. *What names do the* Scriptures *give to Ordinances commonly called Sacraments?*

Anſ. Baptiſm, the Lord's Supper, breaking of Bread, the Lord's Table, the Communion, all of which except Baptiſm, are ſeveral names for *that* Ordinance we commonly call the Lord's Supper. *Epheſ.* 4. 5. *Act.* 2. 42. 1 *Cor.* 10. 21. 1 *Cor* 10. 16. 1 *Cor.* 11. 10.

Queſt. *How many Sacraments are there inſtituted* in, *and* under *the New-Teſtament to be practiſed and attended on?*

Anſ. Two, and *only* two.

Queſt. *By whoſe* Authority *are the Sacraments of the New Teſtament Inſtituted?*

Anſ. By, and *only* by the immediate Authority of Jeſus Chriſt.

Queſt. *Are not then thoſe other five which the Papiſts call Sacraments truly ſo called, and* warrantably *uſed as ſuch?* Scil. *Of Order,*

Order, Penance, Marriage, Confirmation, and extreme-Unction?

Anſ. No, for that they either were *not Inſtituted* by Chriſt *at all*, or not by him *immediatly*, or not to the *proper ends* of a Sacrament.

Queſt. *What are the* Elements *to be uſed in the Lord's Supper?*

Anſ. Bread and Wine and *no* other, *Luke* 22. 19, 20.

Queſt. *Are all the Communicants to receive both of the Bread and Wine?*

Anſ. Yes, *Luke* 22. 19, 20.

Queſt. *Why then do the Papiſts deny the* wine *of the Sacrament to the Laity, and give them only the Bread or a Wafer?*

Anſ. For this bold and *ſacrilegious* practice, they can find no allowance in *Scripture*, nor any reaſons but *trivial*; and ſuch upon which they may as well corrupt, take away *totally*, or *add* to any of Chriſt's Ordinances and Inſtitutions.

Queſt. *What congruity or proportion is there between Bread and Wine the* ſigns, *and what is to be* ſignified *by them in the Lord's Supper?*

Anſ. The Wiſdom of our Lord Jeſus is abundantly expreſſed in his choice of theſe Elements, for their aptneſs to ſignify what is intended by them; which I ſhall give you

you willingly ſome account and proof of.

Queſt. *What fitneſs is there in them to ſignify thoſe things? I would gladly be informed more* particularly.

Anſ. Bread is for Food and Nouriſhment, the *chief* and moſt neceſſary Food of all other: that which is put frequently for *all food*, yea for all neceſſaries of *any kind* whatſoever. The leaſt morſel of it is *compleatly* Bread. Thus Chriſt is Food, and all Neceſſaries to the Soul. Every worthy Receiver, receives *whole* and *compleat* Chriſt. And as Corn is not Bread except ground or bruiſed, ſo Jeſus Chriſt had not been Food for us, had he not been broken and bruiſed with ſorrows and wounds. And as Bread is the common Food of *all* men, ſo is Chriſt of all Saints.

Queſt. *Theſe Myſteries in the Bread are exceedingly expreſſive of Chriſt and his uſefulneſs, ſome of which I ſhould never have thought of. Is there as apt ſignification in the Wine of the Sacrament?*

Anſ. Yea altogether. And as I gave you ſome particularly of the Sacramental Bread, I ſhall alſo hint ſomewhat of the Wine. As, Bread being a Solid Body and ſo proper to ſignify the Body of Chriſt, ſo Wine being liquid is fit to ſignify his Blood.

And

And as Wine is preſſed from the Grape, the Blood of Chriſt was forced-out by his agony, and the wounds of the Croſs. Wine is not only for neceſſity in faintings, &c. but 'tis alſo for delight, and ſuch is Chriſt to a Believer, a Cordial and a pleaſure.

Queſt. *Why is the Bread and Wine ſeparate in the Sacrament and not together?*

Anſ. Becauſe that the Body and Blood of Chriſt were *ſeparated* in his Death: and it is the Death of Chriſt, or Chriſt as *dying* which is repreſented.

Queſt. *May not any Bread and Wine at our common Tables ſignify theſe things?*

Anſ. No, for this were to unhallow the Sacramental Elements, whoſe Holineſs conſiſts in being ſet apart and Conſecrated for thoſe Sacred uſes.

Queſt. *Who may lawfully Conſecrate and Deliver the Lord's Supper?*

Anſ. A Miniſter of the Goſpel lawfully called, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1.

Queſt. *What are the actions of the Miniſter in Conſecrating the Elements?*

Anſ. A ſolemn ſetting them apart to Sacramental uſe by prayer and bleſſing, and applying the Words of Chriſt uſed by him in the Inſtitution of the Elements.

Queſt. *But if the Miniſter be an Unregenerate*

rate man, or his preſent diſpoſition and intention be not ſuitable to that action: doth it not make him uncapable of Conſecrating the Elements, and unſanctify the whole Action?

Anſ. No, by no means: for then we cannot tell when we receive the Sacrament, and when not: becauſe we are not certain of any man's Regeneracy who Adminiſters, nor of his preſent diſpoſition or intention. And the Papiſts (who though they regard not much the Regeneracy of their Prieſts) yet make their intention to Conſecrate the Elements ſo neceſſary to their being a Sacrament, that it is not in the power of their Communicants to be ſure they receive their Sacrament; or that they commit not groſs Idolatry, by worſhipping unconſecrated Bread: though 'tis no leſs than Idolatry to worſhip it, when their Prieſts have made the moſt of it they can.

Queſt. *Is not the Bread and Wine by their Conſecration* Tranſubſtantiated, *or turned from the ſubſtance of bread and wine, into the ſubſtance and eſſence of Chriſt his Body and Blood?*

Anſ. No; and to believe it is ſo, is a groſs and dangerous errour; and the foundation of many abſurdities and Idolatrous opinions

opinions and practices, as among the Papiſts.

Queſt. *But doth not the Scripture ſay of it in Chriſt's own words,* This is my Body? *And is it not then his Body?*

Anſ. It is the Body and Blood of Chriſt in the ſenſe that Chriſt ſpake it, but Chriſt did not ſay this is no longer bread in ſubſtance, but the very ſubſtance of my Body.

Queſt. *How then can we underſtand the plaineſt Scriptures, if the bread be not really Chriſt's Body?*

Anſ. No man queſtions but ſuch phraſes are often uſed *tropically* in Scripture, as alſo in Humane writings: and therefore are not alwayes to be taken in a ſtrict and proper ſenſe: as, *That Rock was Chriſt. I am the true Vine* &c.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I know that this is of that kind?*

Anſ. From the intent of Chriſt in the Inſtitution, and alſo from a perfect neceſſity.

Queſt. *How make you it appear from thoſe grounds?*

Anſ. Chriſt intended it for a Sacrament, and a Sacrament is a *ſign* of what it repreſents: both of which the Papiſts themſelves acknowledg. Now it cannot be both the Body of Chriſt, and the *ſign* of it alſo:

alſo: to think otherwiſe is a groſs miſtake and abſurdity.

Secondly, If it be to be underſtood the Body of Chriſt, and not Bread; we muſt deny all our *ſenſes*, which confirm it to be Bread, and no way Subſtantially changed after the words of Conſecration: and if we muſt deny our ſenſes in things of this nature, we may alſo doubt whether thoſe words are in the Book, *This is my Body.*

Queſt. *If the Bread be not the Body of Chriſt, and the Wine the Blood of Chriſt really and ſubſtantially, how then are they the Body of Chriſt and his Blood at all?*

Anſ. They are Holy and inſtituted ſigns and *repreſentations* of them.

Queſt. *If they are no more, how then doth a Believer in receiving and eating and drinking them, receive, eat and drink the Body and Blood of Chriſt?*

Anſ. By receiving thoſe Elements ſo Conſecrated as ſigns, Seals and conveyances of Chriſt, and his benefits to their Soul. Of this more anon.

Queſt. *How can they Convey that to Believers which they have not in themſelves?*

Anſ. As well as a writing under Hand and Seal and Witneſſes can convey Lands and other Emoluments, which yet are not ſubſtantially in them.

Queſt.

Queſt. *I am glad of this light into this point, a miſtake in which is ſo dangerous. I pray what are the other actions of the Miniſter in this Ordinance?*

Anſ. After bleſſing the Bread, Breaking it, and delivering it to the Communicants in the words of Jeſus Chriſt.

Queſt. *What is ſignified and done thereby?*

Anſ. That it is in the power of God alone, to make thoſe outward Elements to be effectual to convey the Spiritual benefits: alſo Breaking the Bread ſignifies a Crucified Jeſus, who was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions, and that of that one Crucified Chriſt all the Saints do *partake*.

Queſt. *Is there no other action of the Miniſter in this Ordinance?*

Anſ. Yes, a pouring forth of the Wine in the ſight of the Congregation, and delivering it to them after bleſſing it, in the words of Chriſt.

Queſt. *And is there any farther ſignification and inſtruction in this?*

Anſ. Yes, hereby is preſented to us Chriſt ſhedding his *Life*-Blood for us, which is the Sacrifice of *atonement*, and by which we obtain remiſſion &c.

Queſt. *Why doth the Miniſter uſe the words This is* my *Body*, my *Blood? &c.*

Anſ.

Anſ. Becauſe in this Action the Miniſter ſtands in Chriſt's ſtead as his Miniſter, and therein Chriſt is preſent by his Spirit and Authority, and doth as really tender and beſtow himſelf and Benefits, as if he had ſpoken the ſame words in his *own viſible* Perſon.

Queſt. *What outward actions are there more belonging to this Ordinance?*

Anſ. Singing of a Pſalm or Hymn of praiſe to the Lord, ſuitable to the Ordinance, by the whole Congregation of Communicants together.

Queſt. *What is the poſture commanded in this Ordinance for the Miniſter and Receivers?*

Anſ. None at all, but left at liberty: ſo that we preſerve reverence and decency and expediency.

Queſt. *What was the poſture of Jeſus Chriſt and his Diſciples at that time?*

Anſ. Leaning on one anothers boſoms about the bed on which the Proviſion was ſet, which was the poſture of the Jews at their ſolemn Meals and Feſtivals, though but of a civil nature.

Queſt. *Are we not bound to the ſame poſture now?*

Anſ. No, having no command for it, and Chriſt admitting the common Feaſting

ing poſture of the *Jews*, 'tis lawful to uſe ours: but not an indiſpenſible duty.

Queſt. *What time of the day is neceſſary for the Celebration of this Ordinance?*

Anſ. No one more than another, only as it may be more expedient.

Queſt. *Why did Chriſt Inſtitute and Celebrate it at night?*

Anſ. Becauſe that was the time of eating the Paſſeover, and when that Inſtitution ended, Chriſt would have this immediatly to take place. Beſides, it was the laſt opportunity which our Saviour had of liberty to ſo ſolemn a work, and being ſo nigh his *Paſſion*, the remembrance of it by this token ſhould more prevail with and affect us.

Queſt. *The Elements uſed in this Ordinance being ſhadows of good things to come, are they not aboliſhed by the very nature of the Goſpel, whoſe worſhip is purely Spiritual?* 2 Col. 17.

Anſ. The Ceremonial meats, drinks, days, and other Rites of the Law of *Moſes* are done away by the coming of Chriſt ſignified by them: but this is a Goſpel-Inſtitution, and is eſpecially deſigned for a due *remembrance* of Chriſt's death already paſt. *Luke* 22. 19.

Queſt. *But Chriſt reſtraining this Ordinance*

nance to the time of his Coming, he being come in the Spirit, is it not now at an end?

Anſ. The Opinion of Quakers, Seekers, and ſuch-like Enthuſiaſtical and Giddy Perſons is, that it is Aboliſhed by the *coming* of the Spirit: but herein they ſhew their ignorance or fooliſhneſs: for if they mean the *coming* of the Spirit in its Sanctifying operations, it will follow that it was appointed only for Unbelievers, and that the Diſciples who Communicated with Chriſt at his Inſtitution had not the Spirit, but were Unbelievers: both which are falſe and abſurd. If they mean the Extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, or the pouring it forth in an extraordinary meaſure; the Practice of the Apoſtles and Church both at ſuch a ſeaſon, and afterwards; will abundantly convince them of error herein, *Acts* 2. 42. 1 *Cor.* 10. 16.

Queſt. *You have ſatisfied me in the form, and viſible actions of Elements of this Ordinance; and that its obligation is yet in force: I pray tell me now what are the Ends of it?*

Anſ. Firſt and chiefly a Remembrance of our Lord Jeſus, and eſpecially of his Death. *Luke* 22. 19. 1 *Cor.* 11. 26.

Queſt. *But doth not the Word of God, and the Love of God and our own comfort and*

peace, ſufficiently engage and help us to Remember Chriſt and his Death: what need is there then of this Ordinance to thoſe Ends?

Anſ. Our Wiſe and Gracious Lord knows what we need, to advantage us in our duty and comfort better than we; and we are not to queſtion but obey his Command in order to it: beſides, this is a Remembrance which hath thoſe ſolemn conſiderations in it, which are peculiar to its Celebration: and we are none of us ſo mindful of our dear Lord, as may excuſe us from uſing any help he hath appointed and bleſſed to that End. *Heb.* 5. 6.

Queſt. *Is it a bare Remembrance, or calling to mind Chriſt and his Death that is here injoyned?*

Anſ. It is more than ſo, even ſuch a Remembrance as may work impreſſions on us ſuitable to the Ends of Chriſt's Death.

Queſt. *What are they more particularly?*

Anſ. A hatred of Sin, the procuring cauſe of his Death, a ſight of its Evil, which was ſo great as not to be expiated without ſuch an ineſtimable Sacrifice, a confidence of the Love of a Reconciled God to us, and an high Admiration of it, and a ſatisfaction that we ſhall receive all thoſe Benefits which Chriſt purchaſed by the Sacrifice of him-

himſelf: a holy reſolution to keep our Covenant with God, and by a holy Converſation to walk worthy of his inexpreſſible Love to us. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. 1 *Pet.* 2. 24.

Queſt. *What is it that Chriſt gives to the Receiver in this Ordinance?*

Anſ. What he Commands us to take, *viz.* his *Body* and *Blood*. *Luke* 22. 19, 20.

Queſt. *But ſeeing the Bread and Wine are not properly, and really the Body and Blood of Chriſt; and they are the only viſible things we are to take, how do we receive the Body and Blood of Chriſt?*

Anſ. By Faith, which diſcerns and receives Chriſt, though not in the Bread and Wine, yet in the holy and due uſe of them.

Queſt. *What benefit have we by receiving Chriſt in the Sacrament, ſeeing we had received him by Faith before?*

Anſ. The benefit of renewed acts of Faith and Love, and all thoſe Graces and Bleſſings which are the fruit of it: and the renewed acts of God and Chriſt, confirming their Love to, and Covenant with us; which are of ſo deſirable and profitable import to a holy Soul, as that they can never be too ſtrongly evidenced, or too often reported, *Cant.* 1. 2. *Luke* 22. 20.

Queſt. *What more particularly are the benefits which Chriſt gives, & we receive in this Ordinance?*

Anſ. The Exerciſe and Increaſe of every Grace, the Cleanſing our Souls from the Guilt of Sin, farther Experiences of the Love of God in Chriſt; Healing the Wounds which Sin had made in our Conſciences, and Comforts; Firmneſs and Confidence in our walking with God; a Humble and Holy delight in Chriſt and our Fellow-Members, and a farther Tye upon us to our Duty: a Confirmation of the Truth of the Promiſes of God, to them who remember him in his Wayes; and a ſtronger longing for, and expectation of the Bleſſedneſs of the Life to come.

Queſt. *But are theſe Bleſſings depending on the work done, in the outward Actions of it?*

Anſ. No, but on the Bleſſing of Chriſt, which extends to this Ordinance whenever attended on with a due frame. And what can be too great, or too good to be effected, by any means that hath his Commiſſion? *Luke* 24. 30. 1 *Cor.* 10. 16.

Queſt. *But have any found and experienced theſe good things, pretended to be in the Womb of this Ordinance?*

Anſ. O yes, many of the Saints, and many a time; who therefore account the time of its injoyments among the beſt hours they

they have had or expect on this side Heaven: and therefore long for their return, and would not be without them for all the World.

Quest. *Seeing this Ordinance is called the* Communion, *and the* Lord's Table; *inform me wherefore it bears those names?*

Ans. Because they express much of the nature of it.

Quest. *What, and whom have we Communion with therein?*

Ans. With Father, Son, and Spirit: with all the Mystical Body of Christ both in Heaven and Earth, and not only with our Brethren visibly present with us. We have especially Communion with Christ, and partake of him in all his Offices, as our Lord, Teacher, and Saviour: in the benefit of both his Natures as God and Man; in all he was and did on Earth, in all he is and doth in Heaven. And as we have Communion with him, so he with us; partaking of our Natures, taking on him all our Sins, and delighting in our Persons and Graces. *Heb.* 12. 22, 23, 24.

Quest. *Why is it called the Lord's Table?*

Ans. Because it is a Spiritual-Feast, wherein Christ as the Food of Faith is Exhibited and Fed on. 1 *Cor.* 10. 21.

Quest. *What special act of the Receiver is*

performed, more than he doth at other times?

Anſ. He doth Solemnly and Publickly take a Crucified Chriſt, and profeſs himſelf in Covenant, and bind himſelf to its performance in the face of the Church; which is not done by private, and meer inward acts of Faith. 1 *Cor.* 11. 27, 28, 29.

Queſt. *Who are the Perſons whom Chriſt calls to this Ordinance?*

Anſ. Believers, and none but Believers.

Queſt. *Have not Unregenerate perſons need of a Saviour? And is it not their duty to Remember Chriſt, and to Receive him?*

Anſ. Yes, all this is true; but they not being in Chriſt are uncapable of the Seal, and of the Duties of this Ordinance; and Chriſt gave it to his Diſciples *only*, not to the *Multitude*, *Mark* 14. 14. *Mat.* 15. 26.

Queſt. *Do not the Miniſters Sin then, when they give it to Hypocrites, telling them that it is the Body of Chriſt broken for* them, *and the Blood of Chriſt ſhed for* them?

Anſ. No, if he be Faithful in his Duty.

Queſt. *What then is his duty to ſecure him from Sin?*

Anſ. To Examine the Qualifications of thoſe to whom he Communicates. 1 *Cor.* 11. 27. *Acts* 20. 26.

Queſt. *But ſeeing he cannot ſearch Hearts, may he not be miſtaken?* *Anſ.*

Anſ. Yes, he may; but he may be certain he hath done his duty, which is not ſuch as is beyond a poſſibility herein.

Queſt. *But doth he not at leaſt delude thoſe in an Unregenerate eſtate, by ſo plainly applying the Seals of the Covenant to them?*

Anſ. No, for the Seals do ſeal conditionally, *viz.* that they are Diſciples: and the Miniſter Communicates them conditionally, *i. e.* upon their *Profeſſion of ſaving Faith*: and moreover the Miniſter ſhall deal prudently, as well for the Receiver as for himſelf; if he ſhall repeat the Words of the Evangeliſts immediatly before the Application of the Seals, *viz. And he took Bread and gave thanks, and brake it and gave unto them ſaying, this is my Body, &c.* that is to his Diſciples which he may expreſs in the room of the word *them*, it being the ſenſe of it. *Acts* 8. 37. 1 *Cor.* 11. 23, 24.

Queſt. *May not an Unregenerate Man receive Chriſt in the Lord's Supper?*

Anſ. No, he ought not to attempt it as a Seal, neither can he receive Chriſt therein; for that none receive to whom God doth not give: beſides, he that hath not Faith receives only the Bread and Wine, if he preſume he receives more he deludes himſelf, *John* 1. 12.

Queſt. *But may not a man be Converted by this Ordinance?* *Anſ.*

Anſ. Yes, he may: but it not being an Ordinance for that end, but a Confirmation of Faith to aſſurance, and for the increaſe of Grace, he cannot come to it for that end in Faith: and to Sin againſt God, and preſuming without his leave is no good courſe to obtain Converſion by. *Mat.* 12. 12.

Queſt. *What are the neceſſary Preparations of a perſon, and a fitneſs to receive this Ordinance, without which a man hath no benefit by it?*

Anſ. Firſt, the habit of Faith, without which a man is in God's eſteem an Enemy, a Dog, a Swine. Secondly, a diſpoſition and hearty-willingneſs in the action of receiving to receive Chriſt as his Lord and Redeemer. Thirdly, being in Charity with all Men. *Joh.* 1. 7. *Mat.* 15. 26.

Queſt. *But are there no other things neceſſary to a profitable Receiving?*

Anſ. Yes, to a more ample benefiting thereby, and doing our duty with more comfort.

Queſt. *What are they?*

Anſ. Renewed acts of Repentance, clearing to ourſelves our evidence of our Intereſt in Chriſt, & a heart full of Faith & Love to Chriſt and our Fellow-Members, and a longing and thirſting for Communion with Chriſt and his Saints, and other benefits of this

this Ordinance; and self-Examination to those ends, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16. 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. 1 *Cor.* 11. 28.

Quest. *But is not a discerning the Lord's Body necessary also, that we may avoid the threatned Damnation?*

Ans. Yes, it is so.

Quest. *But what is this discerning the Lord's Body?*

Ans. An understanding and esteeming this Ordinance no common Feast, and the Wine and Bread no common Food; but a Sacred representation and conveyance of real Christ to the Worthy Receiver: and also having a suitable respect to the Ordinance. 1 *Cor.* 11. 27. 29. 22.

Quest. *But if I be defective in any of these, shall I be therefore damned?*

Ans. No, it doth not necessarily follow, though all sin do deserve it, and will effect it without Faith and Repentance: but the damnation intended in the Text, is to be understood of God's *chastising Judgments*, which he will inflict on his own Children for a disorderly and contemptuous Receiving of this Ordinance.

Quest. *But what if a man find himself weak, under strong corruptions, and doubting of the sincerity of his Grace; may he come to this Ordinance in that case?*

Anſ. Yes, if he be heartily willing to receive Chriſt, renew his Covenant, and to have every Grace ſtrengthened, and corruptions mortified: for true Faith may be without aſſurance, and conſiſts with many corruptions in being, and doubts: and indeed as ſuch have moſt need of this ſtrengthening Ordinance, ſo Chriſt will be eſpecially kind to, and tender of them, while their weakneſs and defects are their wound and burthen, *Mat.* 11. 28. *Iſa.* 20. 4. *Iſa.* 55. 1.

Queſt. *What is to be our frame and deportment in the Ordinance?*

Anſ. An attending to every action in its proper place, without wandring or confuſion: a ſtirring up every Grace, eſpecially *Faith* and *Love* into exerciſe: a joyful and delightful Communion with Chriſt and his People, with a holy and humble reverence.

Queſt. *What is to be done after the* cloſe *of this Ordinance?*

Anſ. We ſhould be careful to preſerve thoſe quicknings and comforts there received, and that we fall not into any Sin, thereby renewing our guilt and fears: and that we walk both toward God and Men, ſuitable to our Profeſſion and Covenant. 1 *Chron.* 29. 17, 18.

Queſt. *How often ſhould we attend on God in this Ordinance?* *Anſ.*

Anſ. Often at leaſt, and ſo often (except neceſſity or weighty conſiderations forbid) as the Church and Congregation to which we particularly belong do celebrate it. It was the cuſtom in the Primitive times to celebrate it every week or oftner, and it is a manifeſt token of our declining, that we can be content with a much ſeldomer injoyment of it, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. *Acts* 2. 42.

Queſt. *With what people, and in what form muſt we Communicate?*

Anſ. With a particular Church or Congregation, to ſome one of which every Believer ought to joyn himſelf, for the orderly injoyment and benefit of all the Ordinances of Chriſt. *Acts* 9. 26. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17.

Queſt. *May we not Communicate with other particular Churches, than that to which we more eſpecially relate?*

Anſ. Yes, *occaſionally*; but ordinarily with that to which we eſpecially belong.

Queſt. *But may we Communicate with ſuch as differ from our opinion in the point of* Baptiſm; *and ſome points of Order and Diſcipline, and alſo in ſome Doctrinal points?*

Anſ. Yes, for this Communion is with all Saints *as ſuch*, and not as they are diſtinguiſhed by ſome leſſer differences. It is a Communion of the whole Myſtical Body of Chriſt, ſo that unleſs we may be ſo uncharitabl

charitable as to cut them off from the Body of Christ, we ought to have occasional Communion with them. And indeed the opposite Practice herein, is no small disgrace to the Church of Christ, discouragement to Holiness, hinderance of Edification and Peace, and advantage to the designs of the Enemy of Souls. 1 *Cor.* 10. 15, 16. *Heb.* 12. 29,

Quest. *But if I know a person in the Congregation who walks scandalously, may I Communicate with the Congregation while he is there, and a Communicant? do I not thereby pollute the Ordinance? and may I expect the benefit of it?*

Ans. If you know a person lives scandalously, you ought to take Christ's way to have him admonished and recovered, or suspended: if you do not this 'tis your Sin; but in the mean time, though his unworthyness may hurt himself, and grieve you, it doth no way pollute the Ordinance, or hinder its benefit to others. *Gal.* 3. 17.

CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARY
PRESENTED BY
MRS WILSON
OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS
FROM THE LIBRARY OF THE LATE
JOSHUA WILSON Esq
1876